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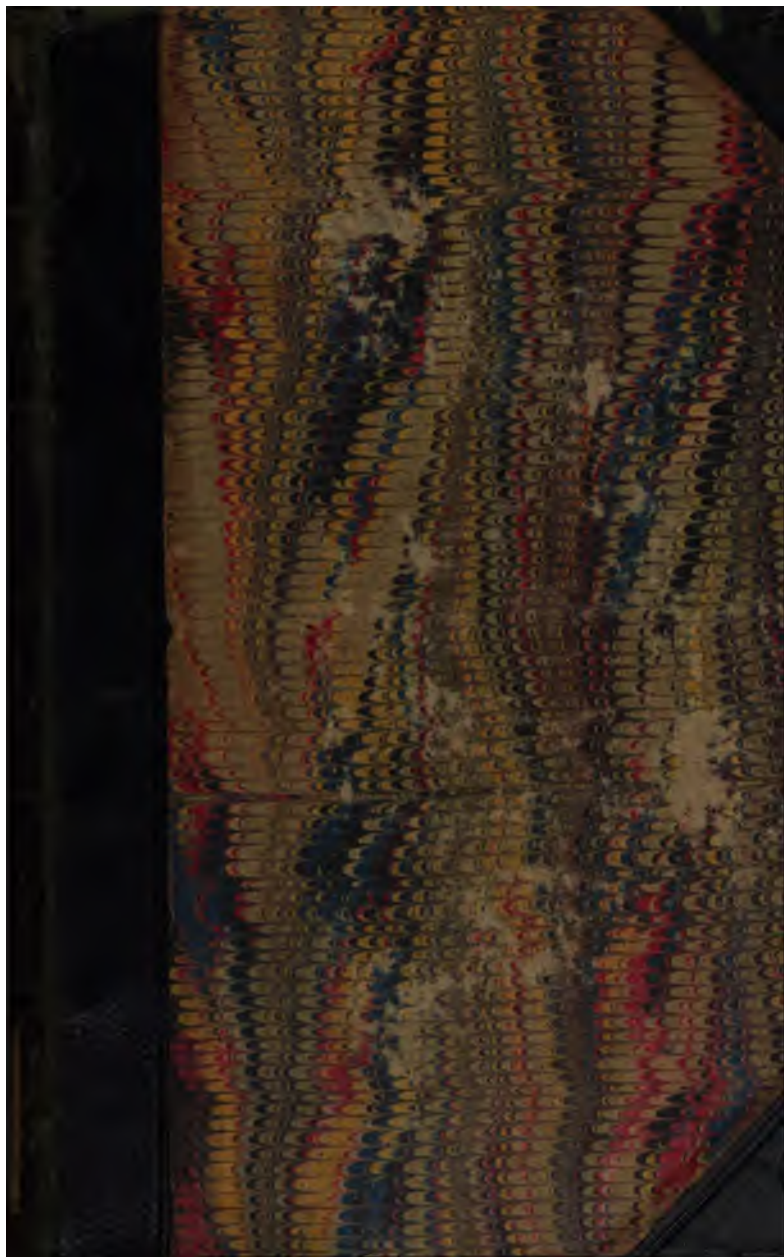
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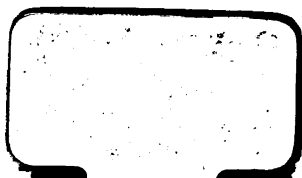
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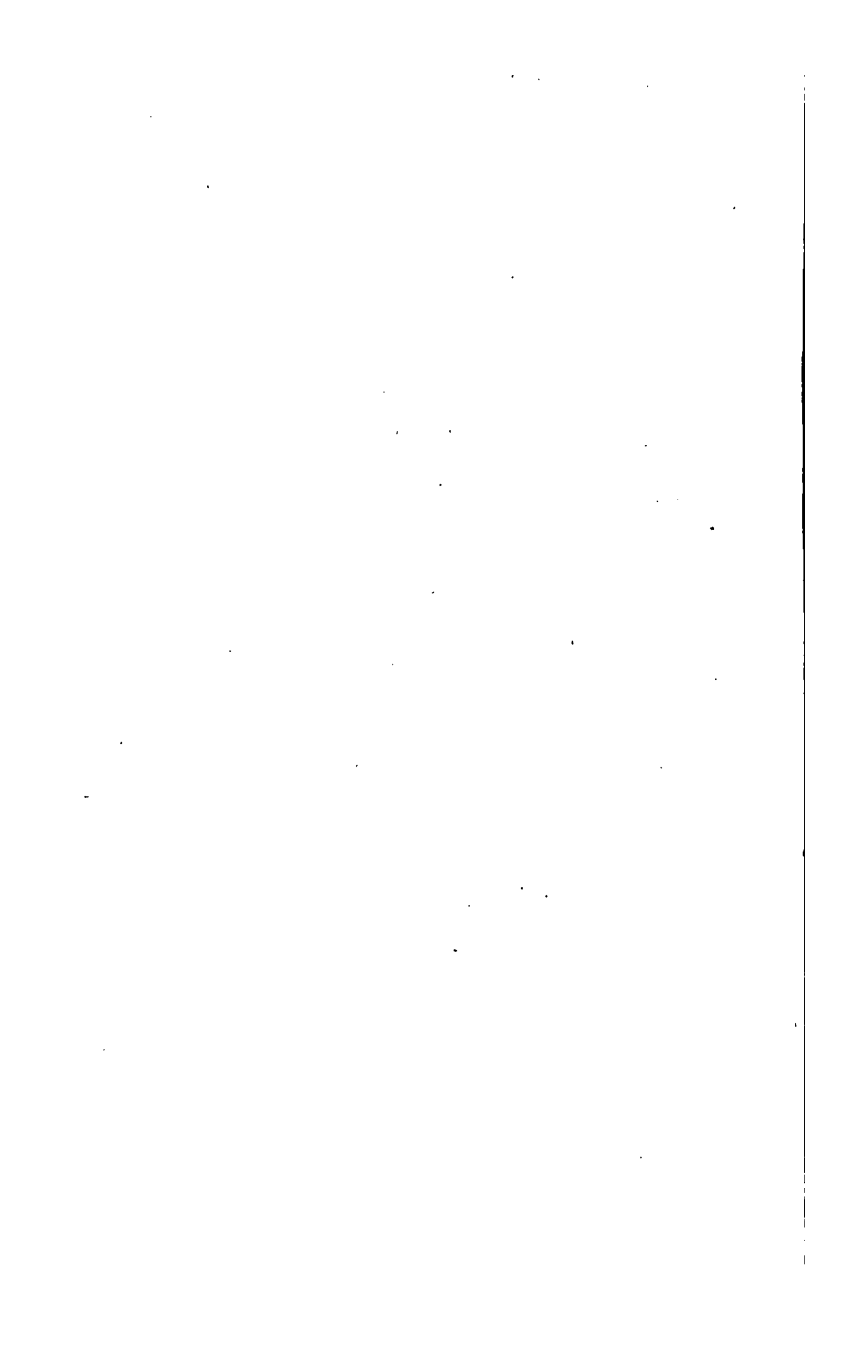
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THE
BRITISH POETS.

One Hundred Volumes.

VOL. LXXIX.



THE
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LXXIX.

COWPER, VOL. I.

CHISWICK :

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COLLEGE HOUSE;

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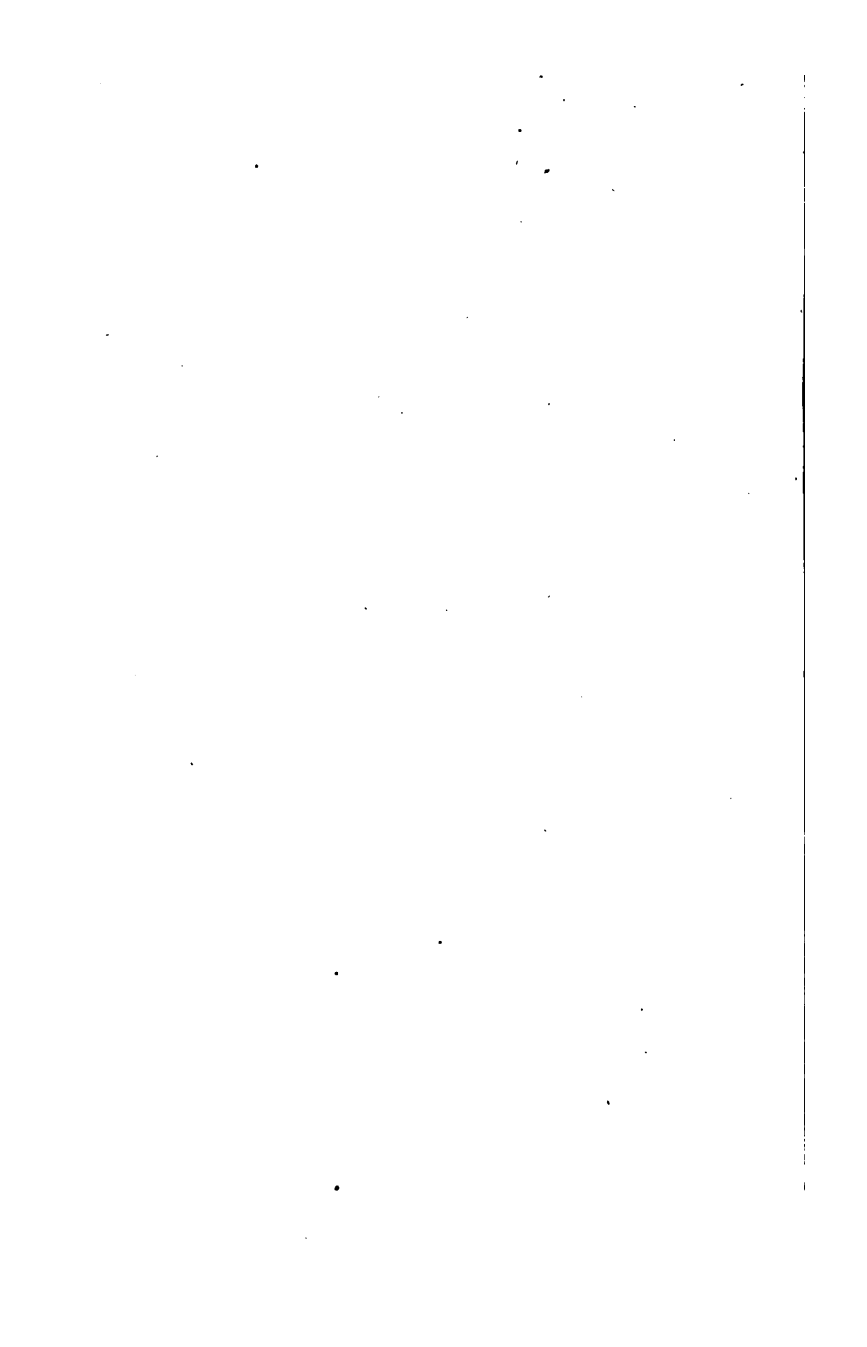
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THE
POEMS
OF
William Cowper.

VOL. I.

Chiswick:
FROM THE PRESS OF C. WHITTINGHAM,
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THE
LIFE OF WILLIAM COWPER.

THE Life of the virtuous and the unhappy WILLIAM COWPER, has employed the pen of more than one of his immediate friends; and the narrative has been enlarged by the minuteness of its details beyond the just claims and the proper interest of its subject. The days of Cowper were those of a melancholy recluse, suffering generally under the infliction of a disordered imagination; and the display of the smaller incidents of these days cannot surely be of any moment to the public either as instruction or entertainment. It is our purpose, therefore, to satisfy the reasonable curiosity of our readers with respect to the author of 'The Task,' without making any exhausting demand upon their patience or their time.

The family of William Cowper was of distinguished eminence, for by his father (who was the son of Spencer Cowper, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and brother to the first Earl Cowper, the Chancellor of England) he was connected with the peerage of Britain, and from his mother (a descendant of the

celebrated Doctor Donne's) he derived a still prouder pedigree, and the blood which had once flowed in the veins of our third Henry, and consequently in those of the first haughty Norman, who established himself on the throne of our old Saxon monarchs. Our poet was the eldest son of the Reverend Doctor John Cowper, and was born at Great Birkhampstead in Hertfordshire, of which place his father was the rector, on the 15th of November, 1731. When he had just entered on his seventh year, he was deprived by death of his mother; and in his ninth he was placed by his father in the school of Westminster. To the roughness of a public school he was ill adapted by the delicate constitution of his mind; and it has been suggested that the first causes of that lamentable malady, which afflicted him through the several periods of his maturer life, might be traced to his treatment by his hardier and less feeling schoolfellows in this distinguished seminary of learning. At the age of eighteen he was articled to an attorney; and, three years afterwards, he was entered at the Inner Temple. But to the study of the law he was strongly opposed by inclination; and for the active prosecution of it at the bar he was disqualified by the feebleness of his nerves. He indulged, therefore, in the fashionable dissipation of the town; and became the associate of his old schoolfellows, Colman, Bonnel Thornton, and Lloyd, in their pleasures and in some of their literary undertakings. At this season of his life also, it is said that he contemplated marriage: but that the lady, who was the object of his love, after a long encouragement of his addresses, finally disappointed them.

By the death of his father (in 1756) he came into the possession of very little, if of any fortune; and, as he could not hope for an income from the bar, it was necessary that his friends' interest should be

exerted to obtain a subsistence for him. His friends were powerful, and they succeeded in procuring for him the lucrative offices of Reading Clerk and Clerk of the Private Committees in the House of Lords. But his insuperable timidity disqualified him for the discharge of the duties attached to these places; and he did not hesitate to resign them. Indulgent to his weakness, the kindness of his powerful friends was still active in his favour; and they soon stationed him as Clerk of the Journals, in the same House of the Legislature; an office in which it was supposed that his personal appearance before the assembled lords would not be required. This supposition, however, accidentally proving erroneous; and his presence being demanded that his fitness for his new duties might be ascertained, poor Cowper shrank from the trial; and, after a most painful struggle, which affected the sanity of his mind, he relinquished his place, and, with it, his last hope of worldly affluence. The state of disordered intellect, into which he now immediately fell, was of so decided a character as to make his removal to the care of Doctor Cotton, a scientific and benevolent physician resident at St. Albans, a measure of paramount necessity. By the skilful and tender management, which he experienced during eighteen months under the roof of this worthy man, our poet was sufficiently recovered to be reinstated in the community of social life. For general society, however, he felt himself to be unfit; and he retired to Huntingdon, without, as it would appear, any particular motives to determine his preference, for privacy and quiet. Here he soon became acquainted with the amiable family of the Unwins; and, the acquaintance growing into mutual attachment, he was admitted, about the close of 1765, as a boarder into their house; in which situation he found all the tranquillity which his diseased

mind required, and all the enjoyment of which it was susceptible. If the intellectual malady of Cowper were not originally induced, it was certainly exasperated by the influence of perverted religion; and the heavenly balm of the wounded spirit, the great solace and the sole support of human wretchedness, became, with an altered nature, to our afflicted poet his torment and his bane. His disorder, however, admitted of frequent and long intermissions; and, for a considerable time after his departure from the college (as Dr. Cotton's house at St. Alban's was usually called), the vision of his mind seems to have been correct, and peace—the peace of God to have resided in his bosom. During this happy season, religion was in her proper office with him, pouring nectar into his cup, and making it to sparkle with life. But the religion of Cowper most unhappily was Calvinistic: and if the Christian faith be ever dangerous to the weakness of the human intellect, it is when this pure and kind faith is arrayed in darkness and in terrors not its own by the spirit of the gloomy Calvin.

The little family, in which our poet was now sheltered, consisted of Mr. Unwin, a clergyman, who received pupils into his house, his wife, Mrs. Unwin, an excellent and intelligent woman, an unmarried daughter, and a son, who was a student at Cambridge; and who, by soliciting and meriting the intimacy of Cowper, had first attracted him to the house of the Unwins. In the society of these amiable persons, into which Mr. Newton, a Calvinistic clergyman, the curate of the neighbouring parish of Olney, was received as a daily visitor and a confidential friend, our poet passed the brightest days of his sad and overshadowed life.

In 1767, the death of Mr. Unwin, in consequence of a fall from his horse, brought affliction into this little party; and, soon after this melancholy occur-

rence, Mrs. Unwin removed to Olney with her family and with Cowper, who now constituted one of its inseparable members. Here his religious passion was fed by Mr. Newton, and here the friendship between these two zealous Christians became the more closely cemented. Here also did the unremitted and affectionate attentions of Mrs. Unwin to her interesting invalid gain a firmer hold upon his esteem, till he gave to her peculiar worth its full claim to the gratitude and the homage of his heart.

In the February of 1770 he was summoned to Cambridge to attend the death-bed of his beloved brother, the Rev. John Cowper, who expired in his arms on the twentieth of the succeeding month; and from the shock of this impressive scene he returned immediately to the consoling friendships and devotions of Olney.

Young Unwin was now ordained and had given himself to the church; and his sister had passed by marriage from her mother's into another family. The domestic party of Mrs. Unwin was, consequently, reduced to Cowper and herself; and it cannot surprise us that, under these circumstances, the attachment between these worthy characters, strengthened as it had been by a long mutuality of kind offices, should induce an offer of marriage from one of the parties and an acceptance of it from the other. But the completion of their union was disappointed by the relapse of the unhappy Cowper into that dreadful state of diseased mind from which he had in a great degree emerged during his residence with the Unwins. The attack of the malady, in the present instance, was fearfully severe; and, during seven years, it pressed upon the wretched man with unmitigated force. If it subsequently relented, it never wholly withdrew; but continued to depress and harass its victim to the last moment of

his mortal existence. Throughout this weary and afflictive period, the virtuous and the devout Cowper conceived himself to be under the Divine wrath, and to be the destined subject of everlasting punishment. To his diseased vision the heavens seemed to be clothed in perpetual black; and the Sovereign throne of Mercy to be filled by an implacable tyrant, inaccessible to prayer, and to whom it was even impious to lift the voice or the soul in supplication for pardon. In this most disastrous condition the miserable Cowper was incessantly tended by the faithful affection of Mrs. Unwin; and all the assistance and consolation, of which his case would admit, were supplied by the tender cares of this admirable woman. When the paroxysm of his disorder remitted, she strongly importuned him to exert his talents in compositions, for the purpose of diverting the melancholy of his mind; and, yielding to her persuasions, he produced in succession the poems which are severally entitled 'The Progress of Error,' 'Truth,' 'Expostulation,' 'Hope,' 'Charity,' 'Conversation,' and 'Retirement.' From the period of his retiring to Huntingdon his pen had hitherto been exercised only in the writing of hymns: but it was now discovered to be equal to higher efforts; and in 1781 its productions, united in a volume, were communicated to the public. In the autumn of the same year commenced his acquaintance and friendship with Lady Austen, the widow of Sir Robert Austen; who came at this time to reside with a sister of hers, at Clifton in the neighbourhood of Olney. From the conversation and cheerfulness of this accomplished and fascinating woman, the melancholy of our afflicted poet experienced much alleviation—more certainly than it had previously derived from all the theology of his Calvinistic friends. On a story supplied by her, he wrote his humorous and popular

ballad of John Gilpin; and it was on her suggestion that he undertook and executed his principal poem, 'The Task.' She, also, induced him, for the more durable, if not the more strenuous, occupation of his mind, to engage in the translation of Homer. But his beneficial intercourse with this lady was too soon interrupted by the very natural jealousy of Mrs. Unwin; and, in rigid accommodation to the feelings of his old faithful friend and tender nurse, he declined at once and for ever the visits of Lady Austen. The sacrifice, however, which he thus made to principle, was of great price; and it proved, in no small degree, injurious to his mental health. Happily, indeed, he still applied himself to the translation of Homer, on which he had begun in the November of 1784; and, from this resolute exertion of his faculties, his spirits acquired so much strength as to enable him to admit the society of a select few, and to blend freely in their conversation. But '*hæsit lateri fatalis arundo*'—the death of his enjoyments still fatally adhered to him, and exhausted the life-spring of his heart.

In the June of 1785 the publication of the second volume of his poems, including 'The Task,' greatly extended his poetic reputation; and it excited, also, the attention of his family, from which he seems to have been withdrawn since the first occurrence of his deplorable disorder. The following year was distinguished among the uneventful years of our poor recluse's life, by the meeting, after a separation of three and twenty years, between him and his affectionate relation, Lady Hesketh. She was the daughter of his uncle, Mr. Ashley Cowper, and the widow of Sir Thomas Hesketh; and she alone of all our poet's kindred appears uniformly to have retained him in her friendly recollection. She had occasionally corresponded with him; and she had lately resigned a portion of her own income for the enlarge-

ment of his comforts. She now came to him at Olney; and, as she determined on residing with him, Mrs. Unwin provided for the accommodation of her augmented family by removing it to a larger house in the neighbouring village of Weston.

In the November of this year (1786) the death of Mr. Unwin, the Rector of Stock, overwhelmed Mrs. Unwin and Cowper with affliction, as it deprived the former of an only son and the latter of a beloved friend.

The shock from this incident was of stunning severity to our author's spirits; and they did not recover from its effects till the autumn of 1787; when they were so far restored as to allow him to resume his translation of Homer. In the execution of this arduous task, his industry was now as steady as his facility of composition was great; and, in the September of 1788, he had not only completed the first sketch of his version of the *Ilias*, but had brought that of the *Odyssey* to the close of the seventeenth book. His young maternal relation, Mr. Johnson of Norfolk, who had recently introduced himself at Weston, where he now usually passed his Cambridge vacations, assisted our poet in the transcription of his long work; and on its accomplishment, in the autumn of 1790, conveyed it to the London bookseller for publication. It issued from the press in the July of the following year; and the friends of the translator were gratified by finding that his assiduous application to this great labour of composition had proved beneficial rather than injurious to the health of his mind. Though weakened, however, his afflicting malady was not overcome. During some of its intermissions, indeed, he could be present at domestic prayer: but it does not appear that, since the last access of his disorder, he ever offered up his solitary supplications, and it is certain that he never

so far recovered as to join in the public devotions of the church.

In the close of the year 1791 his affectionately attached friend, Mrs. Unwin, became the subject of a paralytic attack. But she was soon apparently relieved from its effects; and the alarm of Cowper, in the present instance, was happily of very short duration.

In the March of 1792 commenced his acquaintance and friendship with Hayley, the author of several poems which had acquired much temporary celebrity. On the suggestion of his London bookseller, Cowper had undertaken to prepare a complete edition of Milton's poetic works, and to supply the translations of all this great author's Latin and Italian poems. As soon as he was informed of this engagement of our poet's, Hayley, who was then similarly employed, immediately suspended his own work in submission to the bard of Weston; and accompanied the communication of his relinquished design with a sonnet of compliment, and with the offer of some rare books which had reference to the life and the studies of Milton. These attentions, on the part of Hayley, excited correspondent kindness on that of Cowper; and, after mutual invitations, the two poets met, in the following May, at Weston, where a friendship was confirmed between them which continued in warm efficiency till they were separated by death. During this visit of Hayley's for a fortnight at Weston, Mrs. Unwin experienced a second attack of paralysis of a more alarming character than the first; and the affecting circumstance very forcibly excited the sensibilities of Cowper. She so far, however, recovered her bodily and her mental faculties as to be able, in the succeeding August, to accompany her friend and his young relation, Mr. Johnson, on a visit to Hayley at Eartham

in Sussex. This was the first absence of any continuance from his home, to which our author had submitted during the last two and twenty years of his life; and the requisite exertion, together with the pleasures of his friend's society and place, proved to be salutary to his spirits. On his return, however, to Weston, whence the hospitality of Earham had detained him for seven weeks, he found himself unable to proceed with his Milton engagement, and he confined the efforts of his intellect to the revision of his Homer. The greater part of his day was occupied, indeed, by his attentions to Mrs. Unwin; for she was now reduced to a state of total imbecility of body and of mind; and her place, as manager of the little family of Weston, was supplied by the kindness of Lady Hesketh.

In the beginning of 1794, poor Cowper's disease increased in intensity, and baffled all the exertions of his friends for its mitigation. By the interest of Earl Spencer, importuned and urged into effect by the friendly Hayley, our suffering author now became the subject of the royal bounty, and obtained from it the grant of a pension of three hundred pounds a year. But this accession of income brought no comfort with it to his afflicted mind, which was as insusceptible of impression from any of the circumstances of external fortune, as it was unrelenting to the arguments and consolations that were offered to it by those who were the most zealous for the alleviation of its pains. Hayley, who at this juncture was at Weston, left it in despair; and Lady Hesketh, under the compulsion of impaired health, was forced also in the course of a few subsequent months, to retire from the melancholy scene. The wretched invalid was now left to the sole care of his kinsman, Mr. Johnson; from whose tender and affectionate hands he received whatever could contribute to the

promotion of his comforts. For the purpose of keeping the object of his pious regard more immediately and constantly within his view, Mr. Johnson, who had entered the church about two years before, and had the charge of the parish of East Dereham in Norfolk, undertook to remove the two distressed friends from Weston to some place in his own neighbourhood; and he happily succeeded in the execution of his benevolent purpose. After some removals from North Tuddenham, where they were accommodated with the parsonage house, to Mundsley, a village contiguous to the sea, and from thence to Dunham Lodge in the vicinity of Shaffham, they were finally settled by Mr. Johnson in his own mansion at Dereham.

On the 17th of December, 1796, the infirmities of Mrs. Unwin were terminated by death; and an event, which in a preceding period would have overwhelmed Cowper with wretchedness, was now witnessed by him with calmness, and even with apparent insensibility. His attentions to her, while she yet breathed, were not ever remitted. He was with her just before she expired. He subsequently looked upon her corpse. He passed from the spectacle in silence, and never afterwards gave utterance to her name.

In the June of the following year he relieved the despair of his friends by appearing to revive. He could now attend to the correction of his *Homer*, and he perseveringly applied to it till he brought his work to its completion in the March of 1799. During this relatively tranquil and unclouded interval, he corresponded also with some of his friends; and, besides a few short translations, he composed two original poems, one in English, with the title of 'The Castaway;' and one in Latin, on the appear-

ance of some ice-islands in the German sea, which he called 'Montes Glaciales.'

In the January of 1800, he began to suffer from symptoms of dropsy; and under the increase of this disorder, with a gradual diminution of his strength, he faded, as it were, from mortality; and, on the 25th of the following April, concluded his virtuous and afflicted life, without the least bodily pain, but amid gloom and terrors, with a mind barred against the consolations of religion, and in the full, though still, agony of despair.

As we are informed by his biographer Mr. Greatheed, the person of the amiable and unhappy Cowper, whose mind united the weaknss of infancy with the power of genius, was of the middle height, with a well proportioned form rather strongly than delicately fashioned; his hair was light brown; his eyes bluish gray; his complexion ruddy, and his countenance full of expression and sensibility.

The poems of this excellent man have so frequently been made the subjects of critical remark, and the judgment, passed on them by their different readers, has been of so opposite a character, that it is difficult to speak of them with any semblance of novelty, or with any chance of obtaining, for the opinions which we may express of their proportion of merit, the general concurrence of the public to whom we address ourselves. Cowper is at the head of a particular school of poetry which yet lingers in existence; and the ardent spirit of devotion, which pervades his compositions, has conciliated the peculiar regard of that sect of religionists which, at this moment, embraces a large part of the population of our island. The circulation of these works has consequently been great; and the voice of praise has

loudly been reechoed in their favour from every point of a very wide circumference. By the host of their partizans they have been exalted much beyond the warranty of sound criticism, and their author has been stationed, where it is impossible that he should stand, in the first class and by the side of the foremost of our poets. But let us inquire dispassionately into the fact; and, with the poems of Cowper in our hand, let us determine from their genuine merits, which we admit to be considerable, where among the poetry of Britain they are to be placed, and where, of course, among her poets they can justly claim a seat for their writer.

If we examine the longer rhymed poems of our author (and his shorter pieces cannot be brought into the question), where shall we find in them the rich harmony of Dryden? the tuneful and compressed vigor of Pope? the sweet and ornamented nature, the *simplicitas munditiis* of Goldsmith? Through all these productions of Cowper we can distinguish a flow of original thought, and we are occasionally entertained with the play of fancy, and with a few flashes of eruptive poetry. But their general character is that of prosaic humility. They may sometimes rise for a moment on the wing, but their proper abode is on the earth. They may disclose the fancy that paints; but never the imagination that creates. They are simple in their dress and language: but it is the simplicity of a country maiden, and not that of an Aonian divinity. They suggest not the idea of sterility: but their abundant growth is not the fine vegetation of Helicon. In the preface, if we recollect rightly, to his translation of Homer, Cowper prefers as a charge against rhyme, that it will cover the poverty of prosaic expression. Acknowledging the truth of the charge, we feel confident that of all

our more eminent poets Cowper has availed himself the most liberally of this virtuous efficiency of rhyme. In his rhymed compositions we may incidentally, from a few happier passages, discover him to be a poet: but in these productions he generally and on the whole appears to us to be nothing more than a Christian moralist and divine.

As a writer of blank verse, Cowper rises in our estimation with respect to his poetic power; and, whilst we behold him taking loftier flights, we less frequently see him on the ground. It would seem that, when removed from the safeguard of rhyme, he struggled with the more effect to defend himself against prose. Certain it is that 'The Task' is the most poetic of his works, and that from which alone he can properly demand the immortality of his name. Unquestionably it is the offspring of superior power, and may justly plant a wreath of durable green upon the head of its parent. But 'The Task,' as we must recollect, is one of those planless and random poems in which some of the higher and more uncommon energies of the human mind, those we mean of comprehension and combination, are not called into act. It is one of those anomalous productions, unknown to the accuracy and the pride of classic taste, in which the poet, unshackled by any law, may indulge his fancy without controul: in which he may pursue the topic of his choice till it be hunted down, or till another be started in his path to become in its turn a new subject of his chase. The epic and the dramatic poet are subjected to heavy and severe restraint by their exacted attention to arrangement, proportion, and subordination. In their works every part must have reference to the whole; and none must be enlarged and none even embellished beyond the demand of the place, which it is

intended to supply, in the unity of the entire composition. But in such lawless and vagrant productions as 'The Task,' which may begin with tar-water and end with the Trinity, the poet is liberated from all regard to symmetry and order; he may seize the thought of first occurrence; may dismiss or retain, may amplify or curtail, may ornament or throw it naked from his hand as his inclination may prompt or his convenience may require. His work, in short, is not a piece of regular architecture in which the column, the pilaster, the arch, and the dome, each in its precise station, are blended in one great design; but a heap of uncemented marble blocks, to be admired, possibly, for their individual beauty, but incapable of lending or of borrowing effect in consequence of their accidental contiguity. It must be obvious, therefore, to all who will reflect upon the subject, that the production of 'The Task,' however fine may be many of its descriptions, or however excellent may be the sentiments which are scattered over its pages, or however happy may be certain portions of its diction, cannot elevate its author to any very high rank among the mighty sons of the poetic mind. Unless, indeed, the making of a chaos can be regarded as an effort of equal intellect with that required for the forming of a world, Cowper must necessarily see the great masters of song on an elevation very high above him; and, stationed at the foot of the Parnassian hill, must do homage to Homer, Virgil, Milton, Tasso, and Spenser enthroned in majestic superiority on its summit. 'The Task,' however, will be read with instruction and entertainment by successive generations; and will for ever maintain a respectable, though subordinate, rank among the greater works of the British Muse.

Of the minor poems of Cowper it is scarcely ne-

cessary to speak. Many of them are unworthy of publication: some of them are elegant: a few of them are happy; and two of them are exquisitely pathetic. His great translation of Homer is now generally admitted to be a failure; and of his smaller translations of Milton's Latin and Italian poetry, not more than two or three can be contemplated as rising above mediocrity.

Through all his original compositions, as we may add, there prevails an actuating spirit of devotion towards God, and of benevolence towards man, that seizes irresistibly upon our hearts and makes them captive to the bard. We may frequently disapprove of the writer, but we must always reverence and love the man,

POEMS

OF

WILLIAM COWPER.

TABLE TALK.

*Si te fortè meæ gravis uret sarcina chartæ,
Abjicite——* Hor. Lib. 1. Epist. 13.

A. You told me, I remember, glory, built
On selfish principles, is shame and guilt;
The deeds that men admire as half divine,
Stark naught, because corrupt in their design.
Strange doctrine this! that without scruple tears
The laurel, that the very lightning spares;
Brings down the warrior's trophy to the dust,
And eats into his bloody sword like rust.

B. I grant that, men continuing what they are,
Fierce, avaricious, proud, there must be war;
And never meant the rule should be applied
To him that fights with justice on his side.

Let laurels, drench'd in pure Parnassian dews,
Reward his memory, dear to every Muse,

Who, with a courage of unshaken root,
In Honour's field advancing his firm foot,
Plants it upon the line that Justice draws,
And will prevail or perish in her cause.
'Tis to the virtues of such men, man owes
His portion in the good that Heaven bestows.
And when recording History displays
Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days ;
Tells of a few stout hearts, that fought and died,
Where duty placed them, at their country's side ;
The man, that is not moved with what he reads,
That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,
Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,
Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.

But let eternal infamy pursue
The wretch to nought but his ambition true,
Who, for the sake of filling with one blast
The post-horns of all Europe, lays her waste.
Think yourself station'd on a towering rock,
To see a people scatter'd like a flock,
Some royal mastiff panting at their heels,
With all the savage thirst a tiger feels ;
Then view him self proclaim'd in a gazette
Chief monster, that has plagued the nations yet :
The globe and sceptre in such hands misplaced,
Those ensigns of dominion, how disgraced !
The glass, that bids man mark the fleeting hour,
And Death's own scythe would better speak his
power :

Then grace the bony phantom in their stead
With the king's shoulder-knot and gay cockade ;
Clothe the twin brethren in each other's dress,
The same their occupation and success.

A. 'Tis your belief the world was made for man ;
Kings do but reason on the selfsame plan :

Maintaining yours, you cannot theirs condemn,
Who think, or seem to think, man made for them.

B. Seldom, alas! the power of logic reigns
With much sufficiency in royal brains;
Such reasoning falls like an inverted cone,
Wanting its proper base to stand upon.
Man made for kings! those optics are but dim,
That tell you so—say, rather, they for him.
That were indeed a king-ennobling thought,
Could they, or would they reason as they ought.
The diadem, with mighty projects lined
To catch renown by ruining mankind,
Is worth, with all its gold and glittering store,
Just what the toy will sell for, and no more.
Oh! bright occasions of dispensing good,
How seldom used, how little understood!
To pour in Virtue's lap her just reward;
Keep Vice restrain'd behind a double guard;
To quell the faction, that affronts the throne,
By silent Magnanimity alone;
To nurse with tender care the thriving arts;
Watch every beam Philosophy imparts;
To give Religion her unbridled scope,
Nor judge by statute a believer's hope;
With close fidelity and love unfeign'd
To keep the matrimonial bond unstain'd;
Covetous only of a virtuous praise;
His life a lesson to the land he sways;
To touch the sword with conscientious awe,
Nor draw it but when duty bids him draw;
To sheath it in the peace-restoring close
With joy beyond what victory bestows;
Bless'd country, where these kingly glories shine!
Bless'd England, if this happiness be thine!

A. Guard what you say; the patriotic tribe
Will sneer, and charge you with a bribe.—B. A
The worth of his three kingdoms I defy, [bribe?
To lure me to the baseness of a lie:
And, of all lies (be that one poet's boast)
The lie that flatters I abhor the most.
Those arts be theirs who hate his gentle reign,
But he that loves him has no need to feign.

A. Your smooth eulogium to one crown ad-
Seems to imply a censure on the rest. [dress'd

B. Quevedo, as he tells his sober tale,
Ask'd, when in hell, to see the royal jail;
Approved their method in all other things;
But where, good sir, do you confine your kings?
There—said his guide—the group is full in view.
Indeed?—replied the don—there are but few.
His black interpreter the charge disdain'd—
Few, fellow?—there are all that ever reign'd.
Wit, undistinguishing, is apt to strike
The guilty and not guilty both alike.
I grant the sarcasm is too severe,
And we can readily refute it here;

While Alfred's name, the father of his age,
And the Sixth Edward's grace the' historic page.

A. Kings then at last have but the lot of all:
By their own conduct they must stand or fall.

B. True. While they live the courtly laureate
pays

His quit-rent ode, his peppercorn of praise;
And many a dunce, whose fingers itch to write,
Adds, as he can, his tributary mite;
A subject's faults a subject may proclaim,
A monarch's errors are forbidden game!
Thus, free from censure, overawed by fear,
And praised for virtues that they scorn to wear,

The fleeting forms of majesty engage
Respect, while stalking o'er life's narrow stage;
Then leave their crimes for History to scan,
And ask with busy scorn, Was this the man?

I pity kings, whom Worship waits upon
Obsequious from the cradle to the throne;
Before whose infant eyes the flatterer bows,
And binds a wreath about their baby brows;
Whom Education stiffens into state,
And Death awakens from that dream too late.
Oh! if Servility with supple knees,
Whose trade it is to smile, to crouch, to please;
If smooth Dissimulation, skill'd to grace
A devil's purpose with an angel's face;
If smiling peeresses, and simpering peers,
Encompassing his throne a few short years;
If the gilt carriage and the pamper'd steed,
That wants no driving, and disdains the lead;
If guards, mechanically form'd in ranks,
Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks,
Shouldering, and standing as if stuck to stone,
While condescending majesty looks on;
If monarchy consist in such base things,
Sighing, I say again, I pity kings!

To be suspected, thwarted, and withstood,
E'en when he labours for his country's good,
To see a band, call'd patriot for no cause,
But that they catch at popular applause,
Careless of all the' anxiety he feels,
Hook disappointment on the public wheels;
With all their flippant fluency of tongue,
Most confident, when palpably most wrong;
If this be kingly, then farewell for me
All kingship; and may I be poor and free!

To be the Table Talk of clubs up stairs,
 To which the' unwash'd artificer repairs,
 To' indulge his genius after long fatigue,
 By diving into cabinet intrigue
 (For what kings deem a toil, as well they may,
 To him is relaxation and mere play);
 To win no praise when well wrought plans prevail,
 But to be rudely censured when they fail;
 To doubt the love his favourites may pretend,
 And in reality to find no friend;
 If he indulge a cultivated taste,
 His galleries with the works of art well graced,
 To hear it call'd extravagance and waste;
 If these attendants, and if such as these
 Must follow royalty, then welcome ease;
 However humbled and confined the sphere,
 Happy the state that has not these to fear.

A. Thus men, whose thoughts contemplative
 On situations that they never felt, [have dwelt
 Start up sagacious, cover'd with the dust
 Of dreaming study and pedantic rust,
 And prate and preach about what others prove,
 As if the world and they were hand and glove.
 Leave kingly backs to cope with kingly cares;
 They have their weight to carry, subjects theirs;
 Poets, of all men, ever least regret
 Increasing taxes and the nation's debt.
 Could you contrive the payment, and rehearse
 The mighty plan, oracular, in verse,
 No bard, howe'er majestic, old or new,
 Should claim my fix'd attention more than you.

B. Not Brindley nor Bridgewater would assay
 To turn the course of Helicon that way;
 Nor would the Nine consent the sacred tide
 Should purl amidst the traffic of Cheapside,

Or tinkle in Change Alley, to amuse
The leathern ears of stockjobbers and Jews.

A. Vouchsafe atleast to pitch the key of rhyme
To themes more pertinent, if less sublime.

When ministers and ministerial arts;
Patriots, who love good places at their hearts;
When admirals, extoll'd for standing still,
Or doing nothing with a deal of skill;
Generals, who will not conquer when they may,
Firm friends to peace, to pleasure, and good pay;
When Freedom, wounded almost to despair,
Though discontent alone can find out where;
When themes like these employ the poet's tongue,
I hear as mute as if a syren sung.

Or tell me, if you can, what power maintains
A Briton's scorn of arbitrary chains?
That were a theme might animate the dead,
And move the lips of poets cast in lead.

B. The cause, though worth the search, may yet
Conjecture and remark, however shrewd. [elude
They take perhaps a well directed aim,
Who seek it in his climate and his frame.
Liberal in all things else, yet Nature here
With stern severity deals out the year.
Winter invades the spring, and often pours
A chilling flood on summer's drooping flowers;
Unwelcome vapours quench autumnal beams,
Ungenial blasts attending curl the streams;
The peasants urge their harvest, ply the fork
With double toil, and shiver at their work;
Thus with a rigour, for his good design'd,
She rears her favourite man of all mankind.
His form robust and of elastic tone,
Proportion'd well, half muscle and half bone,

Supplies with warm activity and force
A mind well lodged, and masculine of course.
Hence Liberty, sweet Liberty inspires,
And keeps alive his fierce but noble fires.
Patient of constitutional control,
He bears it with meek manliness of soul;
But, if Authority grow wanton, woe
To him that treads upon his freeborn toe;
One step beyond the boundary of the laws
Fires him at once in Freedom's glorious cause.
Thus proud Prerogative, not much revered,
Is seldom felt, though sometimes seen and heard,
And in his cage, like parrot fine and gay,
Is kept to strut, look big, and talk away.

Born in a climate softer far than ours,
Not form'd like us, with such Herculean powers,
The Frenchman, easy, debonair, and brisk,
Give him his lass, his fiddle, and his frisk,
Is always happy, reign whoever may,
And laughs the sense of misery far away;
He drinks his simple beverage with a gust;
And, feasting on an onion and a crust,
We never feel the' alacrity and joy,
With which he shouts and carols *Vive le Roi!*
Fill'd with as much true merriment and glee,
As if he heard his king say—Slave, be free!

Thus happiness depends, as Nature shows,
Less on exterior things than most suppose.
Vigilant over all that he has made,
Kind Providence attends with gracious aid;
Bids equity throughout his works prevail,
And weighs the nations in an even scale;
He can encourage Slavery to a smile,
And fill with discontent a British isle.

A. Freeman and slave then, if the case be such,
Stand on a level; and you prove too much:
If all men indiscriminately share
His fostering power and tutelary care,
As well be yoked by Despotism's hand
As dwell at large in Britain's charter'd land.

B. No. Freedom has a thousand charms to show,
That slaves, howe'er contented, never know.
The mind attains beneath her happy reign
The growth that Nature meant she should attain;
The varied fields of science, ever new,
Opening and wider opening on her view,
She ventures onward with a prosperous force,
While no base fear impedes her in her course.
Religion, richest favour of the skies,
Stands most reveal'd before the freeman's eyes;
No shades of superstition blot the day,
Liberty chases all that gloom away;
The soul, emancipated, unoppress'd,
Free to prove all things and hold fast the best,
Learns much; and to a thousand listening minds
Communicates with joy the good she finds;
Courage in arms, and ever prompt to show
His manly forehead to the fiercest foe;
Glorious in war, but for the sake of peace,
His spirits rising as his toils increase,
Guards well what arts and industry have won,
And Freedom claims him for her first-born son.
Slaves fight for what were better cast away—
The chain that binds them and a tyrant's sway;
But they that fight for freedom undertake
The noblest cause mankind can have at stake:
Religion, virtue, truth, whate'er we call
A blessing—freedom is the pledge of all.

O Liberty! the prisoner's pleasing dream,
The poet's muse, his passion, and his theme;
Genius is thine, and thou art Fancy's nurse;
Lost without thee the' ennobling powers of verse;
Heroic song from thy free touch acquires
Its clearest tone, the rapture it inspires.
Place me where Winter breathes his keenest air,
And I will sing, if Liberty be there;
And I will sing at Liberty's dear feet,
In Afric's torrid clime, or India's fiercest heat.

A. Sing where you please; in such a cause I
An English poet's privilege to rant; [grant
But is not Freedom—at least is not ours
Too apt to play the wanton with her powers,
Grow freakish, and, o'erleaping every mound,
Spread anarchy and terror all around? [horse

B. Agreed. But would you sell or slay your
For bounding and curvetting in his course?
Or if, when ridden with a careless rein,
He break away and seek the distant plain;
No. His high mettle, under good control,
Gives him Olympic speed, and shoots him to the
goal.

Let Discipline employ her wholesome arts;
Let magistrates alert perform their parts,
Not skulk or put on a prudential mask,
As if their duty were a desperate task;
Let active Laws apply the needful curb,
To guard the Peace that Riot would disturb;
And Liberty, preserved from wild excess,
Shall raise no feuds for armies to suppress.
When Tumult lately burst his prison door,
And set plebeian thousands in a roar,
When he usurp'd Authority's just place,
And dared to look his master in the face;

When the ruder rabble's watchword was—destroy,
And blazing London seem'd a second Troy;
Liberty blush'd and hung her drooping head,
Beheld their progress with the deepest dread;
Blush'd; that effects like these she should produce,
Worse than the deeds of galley slaves broke loose.
She loses in such storms her very name,
And fierce Licentiousness should bear the blame.

Incomparable gem! thy worth untold;
Cheap, though blood-bought, and thrown away
when sold;

May no foes ravish thee, and no false friend
Betray thee, while professing to defend:
Prize it, ye ministers; ye monarchs, spare;
Ye patriots, guard it with a miser's care.

A. Patriots, alas! the few that have been found,
Where most they flourish, upon English ground,
The country's need have scantily supplied,
And the last left the scene when Chatham died.

B. Not so—the virtue still adorns our age,
Though the chief actor died upon the stage.
In him Demosthenes was heard again;
Liberty taught him her Athenian strain;
She clothed him with authority, and awe
Spoke from his lips, and in his looks gave law.
His speech, his form, his action full of grace,
And all his country beaming in his face,
He stood, as some inimitable hand
Would strive to make a Paul or Tully stand.
No sycophant or slave, that dared oppose
Her sacred cause, but trembled when he rose;
And every venal stickler for the yoke
Felt himself crush'd at the first word he spoke.

Such men are raised to station and command,
When Providence means mercy to a land.

He speaks, and they appear; to him they owe
 Skill to direct, and strength to strike the blow;
 To manage with address, to seize with power
 The crisis of a dark decisive hour.
 So Gideon earn'd a victory not his own;
 Subserviency his praise, and that alone.

Poor England! thou art a devoted deer,
 Beset with every ill but that of fear.
 Thee nations hunt; all mark thee for a prey;
 They swarm around thee, and thou stand'st at bay.
 Undaunted still, though wearied and perplex'd,
 Once Chatham saved thee; but who saves thee
 Alas! the tide of pleasure sweeps along [next?
 All that should be the boast of British song.
 'Tis not the wreath that once adorn'd thy brow,
 The prize of happier times, will serve thee now.
 Our ancestry, a gallant Christian race,
 Patterns of every virtue, every grace,
 Confess'd a God; they kneel'd before they fought,
 And praised him in the victories he wrought.
 Now from the dust of ancient days bring forth
 Their sober zeal, integrity, and worth;
 Courage, ungraced by these, affronts the skies,
 Is but the fire without the sacrifice.
 The stream, that feeds the well spring of the heart,
 Not more invigorates life's noblest part
 Than Virtue quickens with a warmth divine
 The powers that Sin has brought to a decline.

A. The' inestimable Estimate of Brown
 Rose like a paper kite, and charm'd the town;
 But measures, plann'd and executed well,
 Shifted the wind that raised it, and it fell.
 He trod the very selfsame ground you tread,
 And Victory refuted all he said.

B. And yet his judgment was not framed amiss;
 Its error, if it err'd, was merely this—
 He thought the dying hour already come,
 And a complete recovery struck him dumb.

But that effeminacy, folly, lust
 Enervate and enfeeble, and needs must;
 And that a nation shamefully debased
 Will be despised and trampled on at last,
 Unless sweet Penitence her powers renew,
 Is truth, if history itself be true.
 There is a time, and Justice marks the date,
 For long-forbearing Clemency to wait;
 That hour elapsed, the' incurable revolt
 Is punish'd, and down comes the thunderbolt.
 If Mercy *then* put by the threatening blow,
 Must she perform the same kind office *now*?
 May she! and, if offended Heaven be still
 Accessible, and prayer prevail, she will.
 'Tis not, however, insolence and noise,
 The tempest of tumultuary joys,
 Nor is it yet despondence and dismay
 Will win her visits or engage her stay;
 Prayer only, and the penitential tear,
 Can call her smiling down, and fix her here.

But when a country (one that I could name)
 In prostitution sinks the sense of shame;
 When infamous Venality, grown bold,
 Writes on his bosom, *to be let or sold*;
 When Perjury, that heaven-defying vice,
 Sells oaths by tale, and at the lowest price,
 Stamps God's own name upon a lie just made,
 To turn a penny in the way of trade;
 When Avarice starves (and never hides his face)
 Two or three millions of the human race,

And not a tongue inquires, how, where, or when,
Though conscience will have twinges now and
When profanation of the sacred cause, [then;
In all its parts, times, ministry, and laws,
Bespeaks a land, once Christian, fallen and lost,
In all that wars against that title most,
What follows next let cities of great name,
And regions long since desolate proclaim.
Nineveh, Babylon, and ancient Rome
Speak to the present times, and times to come;
They cry aloud in every careless ear,
Stop, while you may; suspend your mad career;
O, learn from our example and our fate,
Learn wisdom and repentance ere too late.

Not only Vice disposes and prepares
The mind, that slumbers sweetly in her snares,
To stoop to Tyranny's usurp'd command,
And bend her polish'd neck beneath his hand
(A dire effect, by one of Nature's laws
Unchangeably connected with its cause);
But Providence himself will intervene,
To throw his dark displeasure o'er the scene.
All are his instruments; each form of war,
What burns at home, or threatens from afar,
Nature in arms, her elements at strife,
The storms that overset the joys of life
Are but his rods to scourge a guilty land,
And waste it at the bidding of his hand.
He gives the word, and Mutiny soon roars
In all her gates, and shakes her distant shores;
The standards of all nations are unfurl'd;
She has one foe, and that one foe the World.
And, if he doom that people with a frown,
And mark them with a seal of wrath press'd down,

Obduracy takes place; callous and tough,
The reprobated race grows judgment proof:
Earth shakes beneath them, and Heaven roars
above;

But nothing scares them from the course they love :
To the lascivious pipe and wanton song,
That charm down fear, they frolic it along,
With mad rapidity and unconcern,
Down to the gulf, from which is no return.

They trust in navies, and their navies fail—
God's curse can cast away ten thousand sail !
They trust in armies, and their courage dies ;
In wisdom, wealth, in fortune, and in lies ;
But all they trust in withers, as it must,
When He commands in whom they place no trust.
Vengeance at last pours down upon their coast
A long despised, but now victorious host ;
Tyranny sends the chain, that must abridge
The noble sweep of all their privilege ;
Gives Liberty the last, the mortal shock :
Slips the slave's collar on, and snaps the lock.

A. Such lofty strains embellish what you teach,
Mean you to prophesy, or but to preach ?

B. I know the mind, that feels indeed the fire
The Muse imparts, and can command the lyre,
Acts with a force, and kindles with a zeal,
Whate'er the theme, that others never feel.
If human woes her soft attention claim,
A tender sympathy pervades the frame,
She pours a sensibility divine
Along the nerve of every feeling line.
But if a deed not tamely to be borne
Fire indignation and a sense of scorn,
The strings are swept with such a power, so loud,
The storm of music shakes the' astonish'd crowd.

So, when remote futurity is brought
Before the keen inquiry of her thought,
A terrible sagacity informs
The poet's heart; he looks to distant storms;
He hears the thunder ere the tempest lours;
And, arm'd with strength surpassing human
Seizes events as yet unknown to man, [powers,
And darts his soul into the dawning plan.
Hence, in a Roman mouth, the graceful name
Of prophet and of poet was the same;
Hence British poets too the priesthood shared,
And every hallow'd druid was a bard.
But no prophetic fires to me belong;
I play with syllables, and sport in song.

A. At Westminster, where little poets strive,
To set a distich upon six and five,
Where Discipline helps the opening buds of sense,
And makes his pupils proud with silver pence,
I was a poet too: but modern taste
Is so refined, and delicate, and chaste,
That verse, whatever fire the fancy warms,
Without a creamy smoothness has no charms.
Thus, all success depending on an ear,
And thinking I might purchase it too dear,
If sentiment were sacrificed to sound,
And truth cut short to make a period round,
I judged a man of sense could scarce do worse
Than caper in the morris-dance of verse.

B. Thus reputation is a spur to wit,
And some wits flag through fear of losing it.
Give me the line that ploughs its stately course
Like a proud swan, conquering the stream by force:
That, like some cottage beauty, strikes the heart,
Quite unindebted to the tricks of art.

When Labour and when Dulness, club in hand,
Like the two figures at St. Dunstan's, stand,
Beating alternately, in measured time,
The clockwork tintinnabulum of rhyme,
Exact and regular the sounds will be;
But such mere quarter-strokes are not for me.

From him who rears a poem lank and long
To him who strains his all into a song;
Perhaps some bonny Caledonian air,
All birks and braes, though he was never there;
Or, having whelp'd a prologue with great pains,
Feels himself spent, and fumbles for his brains;
A prologue interdash'd with many a stroke—
An art contrived to advertise a joke,
So that the jest is clearly to be seen,
Not in the words—but in the gap between:
Manner is all in all, whate'er is writ,
The substitute for genius, sense, and wit.

To dally much with subjects mean and low
Proves that the mind is weak, or makes it so.
Neglected talents rust into decay,
And every effort ends in pushpin play.
The man that means success should soar above
A soldier's feather or a lady's glove;
Else, summoning the Muse to such a theme,
The fruit of all her labour is whipp'd cream.
As if an eagle flew aloft, and then—
Stoop'd from its highest pitch to pounce a wren.
As if the poet, purposing to wed,
Should carve himself a wife in gingerbread.

Ages elapsed ere Homer's lamp appear'd,
And ages ere the Mantuan swan was heard:
To carry nature lengths unknown before,
To give a Milton birth, ask'd ages more.

Thus genius rose and set at order'd times,
And shot a dayspring into distant climes,
Ennobling every region that he chose;
He sunk in Greece, in Italy he rose;
And, tedious years of gothic darkness pass'd,
Emerged all splendour in our isle at last.
Thus lovely halcyons dive into the main,
Then show far off their shining plumes again.

A. Is genius only found in epic lays?
Prove this, and forfeit all pretence to praise.
Make their heroic powers your own at once,
Or candidly confess yourself a dunce.

B. These were the chief; each interval of night
Was graced with many an undulating light.
In less illustrious bards his beauty shone
A meteor, or a star; in these, the sun.

The nightingale may claim the topmost bough,
While the poor grasshopper must chirp below.
Like him unnoticed, I, and such as I,
Spread little wings, and rather skip than fly:
Perch'd on the meagre produce of the land,
An ell or two of prospect we command;
But never peep beyond the thorny bound,
Or oaken fence, that hems the paddock round.

In Eden, ere yet innocence of heart
Had faded, poetry was not an art;
Language, above all teaching, or, if taught,
Only by gratitude and glowing thought,
Elegant as simplicity, and warm
As ecstasy, unmanacled by form,
Not prompted, as in our degenerate days,
By low ambition and the thirst of praise,
Was natural as is the flowing stream,
And yet magnificent—A God the theme!

That theme on earth exhausted, though above
'Tis found as everlasting as his love,
Man lavish'd all his thoughts on human things—
The feats of heroes, and the wrath of kings:
But still, while Virtue kindled his delight,
The song was moral, and so far was right.
'Twas thus till Luxury seduced the mind
To joys less innocent, as less refined;
Then Genius danced a bacchanal; he crown'd
The brimming goblet, seized the thyrsus, bound
His brows with ivy, rush'd into the field
Of wild imagination, and there reel'd,
The victim of his own lascivious fires,
And, dizzy with delight, profaned the sacred wires.
Anacreon, Horace play'd in Greece and Rome
This bedlam part; and others nearer home.
When Cromwell fought for power, and while he
reign'd
The proud protector of the power he gain'd,
Religion harsh, intolerant, austere,
Parent of manners like herself severe,
Drew a rough copy of the Christian face,
Without the smile, the sweetness, or the grace;
The dark and sullen humour of the time
Judged every effort of the Muse a crime;
Verse, in the finest mould of fancy cast,
Was lumber in an age so void of taste;
But, when the second Charles assumed the sway,
And arts revived beneath a softer day,
Then, like a bow long forced into a curve,
The mind, released from too constrain'd a nerve,
Flew to its first position with a spring,
That made the vaulted roofs of Pleasure ring.
His court, the dissolute and hateful school
Of Wantonness, where vice was taught by rule,

Swarm'd with a scribbling herd, as deep inlaid
With brutal lust as ever Cîrcè made.
From these a long succession, in the rage
Of rank obscenity, debauch'd their age:
Nor ceased, till, ever anxious to redress
The' abuses of her sacred charge, the press,
The Muse instructed a well nurtured train
Of abler votaries to cleanse the stain,
And claim the palm for purity of song,
That Lewdness had usurp'd and worn so long.
Then decent pleasantry, and sterling sense,
That neither gave nor would endure offence,
Whipp'd out of sight, with satire just and keen,
The puppy pack that had defiled the scene.

In front of these came Addison. In him
Humour in holiday and sightly trim,
Sublimity and attic taste combined,
To polish, furnish, and delight the mind.
Their Pope, as harmony itself exact,
In verse well disciplined, complete, compact,
Gave Virtue and Morality a grace,
That, quite eclipsing Pleasure's painted face,
Levied a tax of wonder and applause,
E'en on the fools that trampled on their laws.
But he (his musical finesse was such,
So nice his ear, so delicate his touch)
Made poetry a mere mechanic art;
And every warbler has his tune by heart.
Nature imparting her satiric gift,
Her serious mirth, to Arbuthnot and Swift,
With droll sobriety they raised a smile
At Folly's cost, themselves unmoved the while.
That constellation set, the world in vain
Must hope to look upon their like again.

A. Are we then left—B. Not wholly in the dark;

Wit now and then struck smartly shows a spark,
Sufficient to redeem the modern race
From total night and absolute disgrace.
While servile trick and imitative knack
Confine the million in the beaten track,
Perhaps some courser, who disdains the road,
Snuffs up the wind and flings himself abroad.

Contemporaries all surpass'd, see one;
Short his career, indeed, but ably run;
Churchill, himself unconscious of his powers,
In penury consumed his idle hours;
And, like a scatter'd seed at random sown,
Was left to spring by vigour of his own.
Lifted at length, by dignity of thought
And dint of genius, to an affluent lot,
He laid his head in Luxury's soft lap,
And took, too often, there his easy nap.
If brighter beams than all he threw not forth,
'Twas negligence in him, not want of worth.
Surly, and slovenly, and bold, and coarse,
Too proud for art, and trusting in mere force,
Spendthrift alike of money and of wit,
Always at speed, and never drawing bit,
He struck the lyre in such a careless mood,
And so disdain'd the rules he understood,
The laurel seem'd to wait on his command;
He snatch'd it rudely from the Muses' hand.
Nature, exerting an unwearied power,
Forms, opens, and gives scent to every flower;
Spreads the fresh verdure of the fields, and leads
The dancing Naiads through the dewy meads:

She fills profuse ten thousand little throats
With music, modulating all their notes;
And charms the woodland scenes, and wilds
unknown,

With artless airs and concerts of her own :
But seldom (as if fearful of expense)
Vouchsafes to man a poet's just pretence—
Fervency, freedom, fluency of thought,
Harmony, strength, words exquisitely sought:
Fancy that from the bow that spans the sky,
Brings colours dipp'd in Heaven, that never die ;
A soul exalted above earth, a mind
Skill'd in the characters that form mankind ;
And, as the Sun in rising beauty dress'd,
Looks to the westward from the dappled east,
And marks, whatever clouds may interpose,
Ere yet his race begins, its glorious close ;
An eye like his to catch the distant goal :
Or, ere the wheels of verse begin to roll,
Like his to shed illuminating rays
On every scene and subject it surveys :
Thus graced, the man asserts a poet's name,
And the world cheerfully admits the claim.
Pity Religion has so seldom found
A skilful guide into poetic ground !
The flowers would spring where'er she deign'd to
stray,

And every Muse attend her in her way.
Virtue indeed meets many a rhyming friend,
And many a compliment politely penn'd ;
But, unattired in that becoming vest
Religion weaves for her, and half undress'd
Stands in the desert, shivering and forlorn,
A wintry figure, like a wither'd thorn.

The shelves are full, all other themes are sped;
Hackney'd and worn to the last flimsy thread,
Satire has long since done his best; and cursed
And loathsome Ribaldry has done his worst;
Fancy has sported all her powers away
In tales, in trifles, and in children's play;
And 'tis the sad complaint, and almost true,
Whate'er we write, we bring forth nothing new.
'Twere new indeed to see a bard all fire,
Touch'd with a coal from Heaven, assume the lyre,
And tell the world, still kindling as he sung
With more than mortal music on his tongue,
That He, who died below, and reigns above,
Inspires the song, and that his name is Love.

For, after all, if merely to beguile,
By flowing numbers and a flowery style,
The tædium that the lazy rich endure,
Which now and then sweet poetry may cure;
Or, if to see the name of idle self,
Stamp'd on the well bound quarto, grace the shelf,
To float a bubble on the breath of Fame,
Prompt his endeavour, and engage his aim,
Debased to servile purposes of pride,
How are the powers of Genius misapplied!
The gift, whose office is the Giver's praise,
To trace him in his word, his works, his ways;
Then spread the rich discovery, and invite
Mankind, to share in the divine delight;
Distorted from its use and just design,
To make the pitiful possessor shine,
To purchase at the fool-frequented fair
Of Vanity a wreath for self to wear,
Is profanation of the basest kind—
Proof of a trifling and a worthless mind.

A. Hail, Sternhold, then; and, Hopkins,
hail! B. Amen.

If flattery, folly, lust employ the pen;
If acrimony, slander, and abuse
Give it a charge to blacken and traduce;
Though Butler's wit, Pope's numbers, Prior's
ease,

With all that fancy can invent to please,
Adorn the polish'd periods as they fall,
One madrigal of theirs is worth them all.

A. 'Twould thin the ranks of the poetic tribe,
To dash the pen through all that you proscribe.

B. No matter—we could shift when they
were not;
And should, no doubt, if they were all forgot,

THE

PROGRESS OF ERROR.

Si quid loquar audiendum. HOR. Lib. 4. Od. 2.

SING, Muse (if such a theme, so dark, so long,
May find a Muse to grace it with a song),
By what unseen and unsuspected arts
The serpent Error twines round human hearts;
Tell where she lurks, beneath what flowery shades,
That not a glimpse of genuine light pervades,
The poisonous, black, insinuating worm
Successfully conceals her loathsome form.

Take, if ye can, ye careless and supine,
Counsel and caution from a voice like mine!
Truths, that the theorist could never reach,
And observation taught me, I would teach.

Not all, whose eloquence the fancy fills,
Musical as the chime of tinkling rills,
Weak to perform, though mighty to pretend,
Can trace her mazy windings to their end;
Discern the fraud beneath the specious lure,
Prevent the danger, or prescribe the cure.
The clear harangue, and cold as it is clear,
Falls soporific on the listless ear;
Like quicksilver, the rhetoric they display
Shines as it runs, but grasp'd at slips away.

Placed for his trial, on this bustling stage,
From thoughtless youth to ruminating age,
Free in his will to choose or to refuse,
Man may improve the crisis or abuse;
Else, on the fatalist's unrighteous plan,
Say to what bar amenable were man?
With nought in charge, he could betray no trust;
And, if he fell, would fall because he must;
If Love reward him, or if Vengeance strike,
His recompense in both unjust alike.
Divine authority within his breast
Brings every thought, word, action to the test;
Warns him or prompts, approves him or restrains,
As reason, or as passion takes the reins,
Heaven from above, and Conscience from within,
Cries in his startled ear—Abstain from sin!
The world around solicits his desire,
And kindles in his soul a treacherous fire;
While, all his purposes and steps to guard,
Peace follows virtue as its sure reward;

And Pleasure brings as surely in her train
Remorse, and Sorrow, and vindictive Pain.

Man, thus endued with an elective voice,
Must be supplied with objects of his choice:
Where'er he turns, enjoyment and delight,
Or present, or in prospect, meet his sight;
Those open on the spot their honey'd store;
These call him loudly to pursuit of more.
His unexhausted mine the sordid vice
Avarice shows, and virtue is the price.
Here various motives his ambition raise—
Power, pomp, and splendour, and the thirst of
praise;

There Beauty woos him with expanded arms;
E'en bacchanalian madness has its charms.

Nor these alone, whose pleasures less refined
Might well alarm the most unguarded mind,
Seek to supplant his inexperienced youth,
Or lead him devious from the path of truth;
Hourly allurements on his passions press,
Safe in themselves, but dangerous in the' excess.

Hark! how it floats upon the dewy air!
O what a dying, dying close was there!
'Tis harmony from yon sequester'd bower,
Sweet harmony, that soothes the midnight hour!
Long ere the charioteer of day had run
His morning course, the' enchantment was begun;
And he shall gild yon mountain's height again,
Ere yet the pleasing toil becomes a pain.

Is this the rugged path, the steep ascent,
That Virtue points to? Can a life thus spent
Lead to the bliss she promises the wise,
Detach the soul from earth, and speed her to the
Ye devotees to your adored employ, [skies?
Enthusiasts, drunk with an unreal joy,

Love makes the music of the bless'd above,
Heaven's harmony is universal love;
And earthly sounds, though sweet and well com-
And lenient as soft opiates to the mind, [bined,
Leave vice and folly unsubdued behind.

Gray dawn appears; the sportsman and his train
Speckle the bosom of the distant plain;
'Tis he, the Nimrod of the neighbouring lairs;
Save that his scent is less acute than theirs,
For persevering chase, and headlong leaps,
True beagle as the stanchest hound he keeps.
Charged with the folly of his life's mad scene,
He takes offence, and wonders what you mean;
The joy the danger and the toil o'er pays—
'Tis exercise, and health, and length of days.
Again impetuous to the field he flies;
Leaps every fence but one, there falls and dies;
Like a slain deer, the tumbril brings him home,
Unmiss'd but by his dogs and by his groom.

Ye clergy, while your orbit is your place,
Lights of the world and stars of human race:
But if, eccentric, ye forsake your sphere,
Prodigies ominous, and view'd with fear;
The comet's baneful influence is a dream;
Yours real and pernicious in the' extreme.
What then!—are appetites and lusts laid down
With the same ease that man puts on his gown?
Will avarice and concupiscence give place,
Charm'd by the sounds—Your Reverence, or
Your Grace?

No, but his own engagement binds him fast;
Or, if it does not, brands him to the last
What atheists call him—a designing knave,
A mere church juggler, hypocrite, and slave.

Oh, laugh or mourn with me the rueful jest,
A cassock'd huntsman, and a fiddling priest;
He from Italian songsters takes his cue:
Set Paul to music, he shall quote him too.
He takes the field, the master of the pack
Cries—Well done, saint! and claps him on the
Is this the path of sanctity? Is this [back.
To stand a waymark in the road to bliss?
Himself a wanderer from the narrow way,
His silly sheep, what wonder if they stray?
Go, cast your orders at your bishop's feet,
Send your dishonour'd gown to Monmouth street?
The sacred function in your hands is made—
Sad sacrilege! no function, but a trade!

Occiduuus is a pastor of renown, [down,
When he has pray'd and preach'd the sabbath
With wire and catgut he concludes the day,
Quavering and semiquavering care away.
The full concerto swells upon your ear;
All elbows shake. Look in, and you would swear
The Babylonian tyrant with a nod
Had summon'd them to serve his golden god.
So well that thought the' employment seems to
Psaltery and sackbut, dulcimer and flute. [suit,
O, fie! 'tis evangelical and pure:
Observe each face, how sober and demure!
Ecstasy sets her stamp on every mien;
Chins fallen, and not an eyeball to be seen.
Still I insist, though music heretofore
Has charm'd me much (not e'en Occiduuus more),
Love, joy, and peace make harmony more meet
For sabbath evenings, and perhaps as sweet.

Will not the sickliest sheep of every flock
Resort to this example as a rock;

There stand, and justify the foul abuse
Of sabbath hours with plausible excuse;
If apostolic gravity be free,
To play the fool on Sundays, why not we?
If he the tinkling harpsichord regards
As inoffensive, what offence in cards?
Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay;
Laymen have leave to dance, if parsons play.

Oh Italy!—thy sabbaths will be soon
Our sabbaths, closed with mummary and buffoon,
Preaching and pranks will share the motley scene,
Ours parcel'd out, as thine have ever been,
God's worship and the mountebank between.
What says the prophet? Let that day be bless'd
With holiness and consecrated rest.

Pastime and business both it should exclude,
And bar the door the moment they intrude;
Nobly distinguish'd above all the six
By deeds in which the world must never mix.
Hear him again. He calls it a delight,
A day of luxury, observed aright,
When the glad soul is made Heaven's welcome
guest,

Sits banqueting, and God provides the feast.
But triflers are engaged, and cannot come,
Their answer to the call is—*Not at home.*

O the dear pleasures of the velvet plain,
The painted tablets, dealt and dealt again!
Cards, with what rapture, and the polish'd die,
The yawning chasm of indolence supply!
Then to the dance, and make the sober moon
Witness of joys, that shun the sight of noon,
Blame, cynic, if you can, quadrille or ball,
The snug close party, or the splendid hall,

Where Night, down-stooping from her ebony throne,

Views constellations brighter than her own.

'Tis innocent, and harmless, and refined,

The balm of care, Elysium of the mind.

Innocent! Oh, if venerable Time

Slain at the foot of Pleasure be no crime,

Then, with his silver beard and magic wand,

Let Comus rise archbishop of the land;

Let him your rubric and your feasts prescribe,

Grand metropolitan of all the tribe.

Of manners rough, and course athletic cast,

The rank debauch suits Clodio's filthy taste.

Rufillus, exquisitely form'd by rule,

Not of the moral, but the dancing school,

Wonders at Clodio's follies, in a tone

.As tragical as others at his own.

He cannot drink five bottles, bilk the score,

Then kill a constable, and drink five more;

But he can draw a pattern, make a tart,

And has the ladies' etiquette by heart.

Go, fool; and, arm in arm with Clodio, plead

Your cause before a bar you little dread;

But know, the law, that bids the drunkard die,

Is far too just, to pass the trifier by.

Both baby-featured, and of infant size,

View'd from a distance, and with heedless eyes,

Folly and Innocence are so alike,

The difference, though essential, fails to strike.

Yet Folly ever has a vacant stare,

A simpering countenance, and a trifling air;

But Innocence, sedate, serene, erect,

Delights us, by engaging our respect.

Man, Nature's guest by invitation sweet,

Receives from her both appetite and treat;

But, if he play the glutton, and exceed,
His benefactress blushes at the deed;
For Nature, nice, as liberal to dispense,
Made nothing but a brute the slave of sense.
Daniel ate pulse by choice—example rare!
Heaven bless'd the youth, and made him fresh and
Gorgonius sits, abdominous and wan, [fair.
Like a fat squab upon a Chinese fan:
He snuffs far off the' anticipated joy;
Turtle and venison all his thoughts employ;
Prepares for meals as jockeys take a sweat,
Oh, nauseous!—an emetic for a whet!
Will Providence o'erlook the wasted good!
Temperance were no virtue if he could.

That pleasures, therefore, or what such we call,
Are hurtful, is a truth confess'd by all.
And some that seem to threaten virtue less,
Still hurtful in the' abuse, or by the' excess.

Is man then only for his torment placed
The centre of delights he may not taste?
Like fabled Tantalus, condemn'd to hear
The precious stream still purling in his ear,
Lip-deep in what he longs for, and yet cursed
With prohibition, and perpetual thirst?
No, wrangler destitute of shame and sense,
The precept that enjoins him abstinence
Forbids him none but the licentious joy,
Whose fruit, though fair, tempts only to destroy.
Remorse, the fatal egg by Pleasure laid
In every bosom where her nest is made,
Hatch'd by the beams of truth, denies him rest,
And proves a raging scorpion in his breast.
No pleasure? Are domestic comforts dead?
Are all the nameless sweets of friendship fled?

Has time worn out, or fashion put to shame
Good sense, good health, good conscience, and
good fame?

All these belong to virtue, and all prove
That virtue has a title to your love.
Have you no touch of pity, that the poor
Stand starved at your inhospitable door?
Or if yourself, too scantily supplied,
Need help, let honest industry provide.
Earn, if you want; if you abound, impart:
These both are pleasures to the feeling heart.
No pleasure? Has some sickly eastern waste
Sent us a wind to parch us at a blast?
Can British Paradise no scenes afford,
To please her sated and indifferent lord?
Are sweet philosophy's enjoyments run
Quite to the lees? And has religion none?
Brutes capable would tell you 'tis a lie,
And judge you from the kennel and the sty.
Delights like these, ye sensual and profane,
Ye are bid, begg'd, besought to entertain;
Call'd to these crystal streams, do ye turn off
Obscene to swill and swallow at a trough?
Envy the beast then, on whom Heaven bestows
Your pleasures, with no curses in the close.

Pleasure admitted in undue degree
Enslaves the will, nor leaves the judgment free.
'Tis not alone the grape's enticing juice
Unnerves the moral powers, and mars their use;
Ambition, avarice, and the lust of fame,
And woman, lovely woman does the same.
The heart, surrender'd to the ruling power
Of some ungovern'd passion every hour,
Finds by degrees the truths that once bore sway,
And all their deep impressions, wear away;

So coin grows smooth, in traffic current pass'd,
Till Cæsar's image is effaced at last.

The breach, though small at first, soon opening
In rushes folly with a full-moon tide, [wide,
Then welcome errors of whatever size,
To justify it by a thousand lies.

As creeping ivy clings to wood or stone,
And hides the ruin that it feeds upon;
So sophistry cleaves close to and protects
Sin's rotten trunk, concealing its defects.
Mortals, whose pleasures are their only care,
First wish to be imposed on, and then are.
And, lest the fulsome artifice should fail,
Themselves will hide its coarseness with a veil.
Not more industrious are the just and true,
To give to Virtue what is Virtue's due—
The praise of wisdom, comeliness, and worth,
And call her charms to public notice forth—
Than Vice's mean and disingenuous race,
To hide the shocking features of her face.
Her form with dress and lotion they repair;
Then kiss their idol, and pronounce her fair.

The sacred implement I now employ
Might prove a mischief, or at best a toy;
A trifle if it move but to amuse;
But, if to wrong the judgment and abuse,
Worse than a poniard in the basest hand,
It stabs at once the morals of a land.

Ye writers of what none with safety reads,
Footing it in the dance that fancy leads:
Ye novelists, who mar what ye would mend,
Sniveling and driveling folly without end;
Whose corresponding misses fill the ream
With sentimental frippery and dream,

Caught in a delicate soft silken net
By some lewd earl or rakehell baronet;
Ye pimps, who under Virtue's fair pretence,
Steal to the closet of young Innocence,
And teach her, unexperienced yet and green,
To scribble as you scribbled at fifteen:
Who, kindling a combustion of desire,
With some cold moral think to quench the fire;
Though all your engineering proves in vain,
The dribbling stream ne'er puts it out again.
O, that a verse had power, and could command
Far, far away, these flesh-flies of the land,
Who fasten without mercy on the fair,
And suck, and leave a craving maggot there!
Howe'er disguised the' inflammatory tale,
And cover'd with a fine-spun specious veil;
Such writers and such readers owe the gust
And relish of their pleasure all to lust.

But the Muse, eagle-pinion'd, has in view
A quarry more important still than you;
Down, down the wind she swims and sails away,
Now stoops upon it, and now grasps the prey.

Petronius! all the Muses weep for thee;
But every tear shall scald thy memory:
The Graces too, while Virtue at their shrine
Lay bleeding under that soft hand of thine,
Felt each a mortal stab in her own breast,
Abhorr'd the sacrifice, and cursed the priest.
Thou polish'd and high-finish'd foe to truth,
Graybeard corrupter of our listening youth,
To purge and skim away the filth of vice,
That so refined it might the more entice,
Then pour it on the morals of thy son;
To taint *his* heart was worthy of *thine own*!

Now, while the poison all high life pervades,
Write, if thou canst, one letter from the shades;
One, and one only, charged with deep regret,
That thy worst part, thy principles, live yet;
One sad epistle thence may cure mankind
Of the plague spread by bundles left behind.

'Tis granted, and no plainer truth appears,
Our most important are our earliest years;
The Mind, impressible and soft, with ease
Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees,
And through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue,
That Education gives her, false or true.
Plants raised with tenderness are seldom strong;
Man's coltish disposition asks the thong;
And, without discipline, the favourite child,
Like a neglected forester, runs wild.
But we, as if good qualities would grow
Spontaneous, take but little pains to sow;
We give some Latin, and a smatch of Greek;
Teach him to fence and figure twice a week;
And having done, we think, the best we can,
Praise his proficiency, and dub him man.

From school to Cam or Isis, and thence home;
And thence with all convenient speed to Rome.
With reverend tutor clad in habit lay,
To tease for cash, and quarrel with all day;
With memorandum-book for every town,
And every post, and where the chaise broke down;
His stock a few French phrases got by heart,
With much to learn, but nothing to impart;
The youth, obedient to his sire's commands,
Sets off a wanderer into foreign lands.
Surprised at all they meet, the gosling pair,
With awkward gait, stretch'd neck, and silly stare,

Discover huge cathedrals built with stone,
And steeples towering high much like our own;
But show peculiar light by many a grin
At popish practises observed within.

Ere long some bowing, smirking, smart abbé
Remarks two loiterers that have lost their way;
And, being always primed with *politesse*
For men of their appearance and address,
With much compassion undertakes the task,
To tell them more than they have wit to ask:
Points to inscriptions wheresoe'er they tread,
Such as, when legible, were never read,
But, being canker'd now and half worn out,
Craze antiquarian brains with endless doubt;
Some headless hero, or some Cæsar, shows—
Defective only in his Roman nose;
Exhibits elevations, drawings, plans,
Models of Herculean pots and pans;
And sells them medals, which, if neither rare
Nor ancient, will be so, preserved with care.

Strange the recital! from whatever cause
His great improvement and new light he draws,
The squire, once bashful, is shamefaced no more,
But teems with powers he never felt before;
Whether increased momentum, and the force
With which from clime to clime he sped his course
(As axles sometimes kindle as they go),
Chafed him, and brought dull nature to a glow;
Or whether clearer skies and softer air,
That make Italian flowers so sweet and fair,
Freshening his lazy spirits as he ran,
Unfolded genially and spread the man;
Returning he proclaims by many a grace,
By shrugs and strange contortions of his face,

How much a dunce that has been sent to roam
Excels a dunce that has been kept at home.

Accomplishments have taken virtue's place,
And wisdom falls before exterior grace;
We slight the precious kernel of the stone,
And toil to polish its rough coat alone.

A just deportment, manners graced with ease,
Elegant phrase, and figure form'd to please,
Are qualities that seem to comprehend

Whatever parents, guardians, schools intend:

Hence an unfurnish'd and a listless mind,

Though busy, trifling; empty, though refined;

Hence all that interferes, and dares to clash

With indolence and luxury, is trash:

While learning, once the man's exclusive pride,
Seems verging fast towards the female side.

Learning itself, received into a mind

By nature weak, or viciously inclined,

Serves but to lead philosophers astray,

Where children would with ease discern the way.

And of all arts sagacious dupes invent,

To cheat themselves and gain the world's assent,

The worst is—Scripture warp'd from its intent.

The carriage bowls along, and all are pleased

If Tom be sober, and the wheels well greased;

But if the rogue have gone a cup too far,

Left out his linchpin, or forgot his tar,

It suffers interruption and delay,

And meets with hinderance in the smoothest way.

When some hypothesis absurd and vain

Has fill'd with all its fumes a critic's brain,

The text, that sorts not with his darling whim,

Though plain to others, is obscure to him.

The will made subject to a lawless force,
All is irregular and out of course;
And Judgment drunk, and bribed to lose his way,
Winks hard, and talks of darkness at noonday.

A critic on the sacred book should be
Candid and learn'd, dispassionate and free;
Free from the wayward bias bigots feel,
From fancy's influence, and intemperate zeal:
But above all (or let the wretch refrain,
Nor touch the page he cannot but profane),
Free from the domineering power of lust;
A lewd interpreter is never just.

How shall I speak thee, or thy power address,
Thou god of our idolatry, the press?
By thee religion, liberty, and laws
Exert their influence, and advance their cause;
By thee worse plagues than Pharaoh's land befell,
Diffused, make earth the vestibule of Hell;
Thou fountain, at which drink the good and wise;
Thou ever bubbling spring of endless lies;
Like Eden's dread probationary tree,
Knowledge of good and evil is from thee.

No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest,
Till half mankind were like himself possess'd.
Philosophers, who darken and put out
Eternal truth, by everlasting doubt;
Church quacks, with passions under no command,
Who fill the world with doctrines contraband,
Discoverers of they know not what, confined
Within no bounds—the blind that lead the blind;
To streams of popular opinion drawn,
Deposit in those shallows all their spawn.
The wriggling fry soon fill the creeks around,
Poisoning the waters where their swarms abound;

Scorn'd by the nobler tenants of the flood,
Minnows and gudgeons gorge the' unwholesome
The propagated myriads spread so fast, [food.
E'en Leuwenhoeck himself would stand aghast,
Employ'd to calculate the' enormous sum,
And own his crab-computing powers o'ercome.
Is this hyperbole? The world well known,
Your sober thoughts will hardly find it one.

Fresh confidence the speculatist takes
From every hairbrain'd proselyte he makes;
And therefore prints. Himself but half deceived,
Till others have the soothing tale believed.
Hence comment after comment, spun as fine
As bloated spiders draw the flimsy line:
Hence the same word, that bids our lusts obey,
Is misapplied to sanctify their sway.
If stubborn Greek refuse to be his friend,
Hebrew or Syriac shall be forced to bend:
If languages and copies all cry No—
Somebody proved it centuries ago.
Like trout pursued, the critic in despair
Darts to the mud, and finds his safety there.
Women, whom custom has forbid to fly
The scholar's pitch (the scholar best knows why),
With all the simple and unletter'd poor,
Admire his learning, and almost adore.
Whoever errs, the priest can ne'er be wrong,
With such fine words familiar to his tongue.

Ye ladies! (for indifferent in your cause,
I should deserve to forfeit all applause)
Whatever shocks, or gives the least offence
To virtue, delicacy, truth, or sense
(Try the criterion, 'tis a faithful guide),
Nor has, nor can have, Scripture on its side.

None but an author knows an author's cares,
Or Fancy's fondness for the child she bears.
Committed once into the public arms,
The baby seems to smile with added charms.
Like some thing precious ventured far from shore,
'Tis valued for the danger's sake the more.
He views it with complacency supreme,
Solicits kind attention to his dream;
And daily more enamour'd of the cheat,
Kneels, and asks Heaven to bless the dear deceit.
So one, whose story serves at least to show
Men loved their own productions long ago,
Woo'd an unfeeling statue for his wife,
Nor rested till the gods had given it life.
If some mere driveller suck the sugar'd fib,
One that still needs his leading-string and bib,
And praise his genius, he is soon repaid
In praise applied to the same part—his head;
For 'tis a rule, that holds for ever true,
Grant me discernment, and I grant it you.

Patient of contradiction as a child,
Affable, humble, diffident, and mild;
Such was Sir Isaac, and such Boyle and Locke:
Your blunderer is as sturdy as a rock.
The creature is so sure to kick and bite,
A muleteer's the man to set him right.
First Appetite enlists him Truth's sworn foe,
Then obstinate Selfwill confirms him so.
Tell him he wanders; that his error leads
To fatal ills; that, though the path he treads
Be flowery, and he see no cause of fear,
Death and the pains of Hell attend him there;
In vain; the slave of arrogance and pride,
He has no hearing on the prudent side.

His still refuted quirks he still repeats;
New raised objections with new quibbles meets;
Till, sinking in the quicksand he defends,
He dies disputing, and the contest ends—
But not the mischiefs; they, still left behind,
Like thistle seeds, are sown by every wind.

Thus men grow wrong with an ingenious skill;
Bend the straight rule to their own crooked will:
And with a clear and shining lamp supplied,
First put it out, then take it for a guide.
Halting on crutches of unequal size,
One leg by truth supported, one by lies;
They sidle to the goal with awkward pace,
Secure of nothing—but to lose the race.

Faults in the life breed errors in the brain:
And these reciprocally those again.
The mind and conduct mutually imprint
And stamp their image in each other's mint:
Each, sire and dam, of an infernal race,
Begetting and conceiving all that's base.

None sends his arrow to the mark in view,
Whose hand is feeble, or his aim untrue,
For though, ere yet the shaft is on the wing,
Or when it first forsakes the' elastic string,
It err but little from the' intended line,
It falls at last far wide of his design:
So he, who seeks a mansion in the sky,
Must watch his purpose with a steadfast eye:
That prize belongs to none but the sincere,
The least obliquity is fatal here.

With caution taste the sweet Circean cup:
He that sips often, at last drinks it up.
Habits are soon assumed; but when we strive
To strip them off, 'tis being flay'd alive.

Call'd to the temple of impure delight,
He that abstains, and he alone, does right.
If a wish wander that way, call it home;
He cannot long be safe whose wishes roam.
But, if you pass the threshold, you are caught;
Die then, if power Almighty save you not.
There hardening by degrees, till double steel'd,
Take leave of Nature's God, and God reveal'd;
Then laugh at all you trembled at before;
And, joining the freethinkers' brutal roar,
Swallow the two grand nostrums they dispense—
That Scripture lies, and blasphemy is sense:
If clemency revolted by abuse
Be damnable, then damn'd without excuse.

Some dream, that they can silence, when they
will,

The storm of passion, and say, *Peace, be still*;
But *Thus far and no farther*, when address'd
To the wild wave, or wilder human breast,
Implies authority, that never can,
That never ought to be the lot of man.

But, Muse, forbear; long flights forebode a fall:
Strike on the deep-toned chord the sum of all.

Hear the just law—the judgment of the skies,
He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies:
And he that *will* be cheated to the last,
Delusions strong as Hell shall bind him fast.
But if the wanderer his mistake discern,
Judge his own ways, and sigh for a return,
Bewilder'd once, must he bewail his loss
For ever and for ever? No—the cross!
There and there only (though the deist rave,
And atheist, if earth bear so base a slave);
There and there only is the power to save.

There no delusive hope invites despair;
 No mockery meets you, no deception there.
 The spells and charms, that blinded you before,
 All vanish there, and fascinate no more.

I am no preacher, let this hint suffice—
 The cross once seen is death to every vice:
 Else he that hung there suffer'd all his pain,
 Bled, groan'd, and agonized, and died in vain.

 TRUTH.

Pensantur trutinæ. HOR. Lib. II. Epist. 1.

MAN, on the dubious waves of error toss'd,
 His ship half-founder'd, and his compass lost,
 Sees, far as human optics may command,
 A sleeping fog, and fancies it dry land:
 Spreads all his canvass, every sinew plies;
 Pants for't, aims at it, enters it, and dies!
 Then farewell all self-satisfying schemes,
 His wellbuilt systems, philosophic dreams;
 Deceitful views of future bliss, farewell!
 He reads his sentence at the flames of Hell.

Hard lot of man—to toil for the reward
 Of virtue, and yet lose it! Wherefore hard?
 He that would win the race must guide his horse
 Obedient to the customs of the course;
 Else, though unequal'd to the goal he flies,
 A meaner than himself shall gain the prize.
 Grace leads the right way: if you choose the wrong,
 Take it and perish; but restrain your tongue;

Charge not, with light sufficient, and left free,
Your wilful suicide on God's decree.

O, how unlike the complex works of man,
Heaven's easy, artless, uniacumber'd plan!
No meretricious graces to beguile,
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile;
From ostentation as from weakness free,
It stands like the cerulean arch we see,
Majestic in its own simplicity.
Inscribed above the portal, from afar
Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,
Legible only by the light they give, [LIVE.
Stand the soul-quickenings words—BELIEVE AND
Too many, shock'd at what should charm them
Despise the plain direction, and are lost. [most,
Heaven on such terms! (they cry with proud dis-
Incredible, impossible, and vain!— [dain)
Rebel, because 'tis easy to obey;
And scorn, for its own sake, the gracious way.
These are the sober, in whose cooler brains
Some thought of immortality remains;
The rest too busy or too gay to wait
On the sad theme, their everlasting state,
Sport for a day, and perish in a night,
The foam upon the waters not so light.

Who judged the pharisee? What odious cause
Exposed him to the vengeance of the laws!
Had he seduced a virgin, wrong'd a friend,
Or stabb'd a man to serve some private end?
Was blasphemy his sin? Or did he stray
From the strict duties of the sacred day?
Sit long and late at the carousing board?
(Such were the sins with which he charged his
Lord)

No—the man's morals were exact; what then?
'Twas his ambition to be seen of men;
His virtues were his pride; and that one vice
Made all his virtues gewgaws of no price;
He wore them as fine trappings for a show,
A praying, synagogue-frequenting beau.

The self-applauding bird, the peacock see—
Mark what a sumptuous pharisee is he!
Meridian sunbeams tempt him to unfold
His radiant glories, azure, green, and gold:
He treads as if, some solemn music near,
His measured step were govern'd by his ear;
And seems to say—Ye meaner fowl, give place,
I am all splendour, dignity, and grace!

Not so the pheasant on his charms presumes,
Though he too has a glory in his plumes;
He, Christianlike, retreats with modest mien
To the close copse, or far sequester'd green,
And shines without desiring to be seen.
The plea of works, as arrogant and vain,
Heaven turns from with abhorrence and disdain;
No more affronted by avow'd neglect,
Than by the mere dissembler's feign'd respect.
What is all righteousness that men devise?
What—but a sordid bargain for the skies?
But Christ as soon would abdicate his own,
As stoop from Heaven to sell the proud a throne.

His dwelling a recess in some rude rock,
Book, beads, and maple-dish, his meagre stock;
In shirt of hair and weeds of canvass dress'd,
Girt with a bell-rope, that the Pope has bless'd;
Adust with stripes told out for every crime,
And sore tormented long before his time;

His prayer preferr'd to saints, that cannot aid;
His praise postponed, and never to be paid;
See the sage hermit, by mankind admired,
With all that bigotry adopts inspired,
Wearing out life in his religious whim,
Till his religious whimsey wears out him.
His works, his abstinence, his zeal allow'd,
You think him humble—God accounts him proud;
High in demand, though lowly in pretence,
Of all his conduct this the genuine sense—
My penitential stripes, my streaming blood
Have purchased Heaven, and prove my title good.

Turn eastward now, and Fancy shall apply
To your weak sight her telescopic eye.
The bramin kindles on his own bare head
The sacred fire, self-torturing his trade;
His voluntary pains, severe and long,
Would give a barbarous air to British song;
No grand inquisitor could worse invent,
Than he contrives to suffer, well content.

Which is the saintly worthier of the two?
Past all dispute, yon anchorite say you.
Your sentence and mine differ. What's a name?
I say the bramin has the fairer claim.
If sufferings Scripture no where recommends,
Devised by self to answer selfish ends,
Give saintship, then all Europe must agree
Ten starveling hermits suffer less than he.

The truth is (if the truth may suit your ear,
And prejudice have left a passage clear),
Pride has attain'd its most luxuriant growth,
And poison'd every virtue in them both.
Pride may be pamper'd while the flesh grows lean;
Humility may clothe an English dean;

That grace was Cowper's—his, confess'd by all—
Though placed in golden Durham's second stall.
Not all the plenty of a Bishop's board,
His palace, and his lackeys, and "My Lord,"
More nourish pride, that condescending vice,
Than abstinence, and beggary, and lice;
It thrives in misery, and abundant grows
In misery fools upon themselves impose.

But why before us, protestants, produce
An Indian mystic or a French recluse?
Their sin is plain; but what have we to fear,
Reform'd and well instructed? You shall hear.

Yon ancient prude, whose wither'd features show
She might be young some forty years ago,
Her elbows pinion'd close upon her hips,
Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,
Her eyebrows arch'd, her eyes both gone astray,
To watch yon amorous couple in their play,
With bony and unkerchief'd neck defies
The rude inclemency of wintry skies,
And sails with lappet-head, and mincing airs,
Duly at clink of bell to morning prayers.
To thrift and parsimony much inclined,
She yet allows herself that boy behind;
The shivering urchin, bending as he goes,
With slipshod heels, and dewdrop at his nose;
His predecessor's coat advanced to wear,
Which future pages yet are doom'd to share,
Carries her Bible tuck'd beneath his arm,
And hides his hands to keep his fingers warm.

She, half an angel in her own account,
Doubts not hereafter with the saints to mount,
Though not a grace appears, on strictest search,
But that she fasts and, *item*, goes to church.

Conscious of age she recollects her youth,
And tells, not always with an eye to truth,
Who spann'd her waist, and who, where'er he came,
Scrawl'd upon glass Miss Bridget's lovely name;
Who stole her slipper, fill'd it with tokay,
And drank the little bumper every day.
Of temper as envenom'd as an asp,
Censorious, and her every word a wasp;
In faithful memory she records the crimes,
Or real or fictitious, of the times;
Laughs at the reputations she has torn,
And holds them dangling at arm's length in scorn.

Such are the fruits of sanctimonious pride,
Of malice fed while flesh is mortified;
Take, Madam, the reward of all your prayers,
Where hermits and where bramins meet with
theirs;

Your portion is with them—Nay, never frown,
But, if you please, some fathoms lower down.

Artist, attend—your brushes and your paint—
Produce them—take a chair—now draw a saint.
Oh sorrowful and sad! the streaming tears
Channel her cheeks—a Niobe appears!
Is this a saint? Throw tints and all away—
True Piety is cheerful as the day,
Will weep indeed, and heave a pitying groan
For others' woes, but smiles upon her own.

What purpose has the King of saints in view?
Why falls the Gospel like a gracious dew?
To call up plenty from the teeming earth,
Or curse the desert with a tenfold dearth?
Is it that Adam's offspring may be saved
From servile fear, or be the more enslaved?
To loose the links that gall'd mankind before,
Or bind them faster on, and add still more?

The freeborn Christian has no chains to prove,
Or, if a chain, the golden one of love :
No fear attends to quench his glowing fires,
What fear he feels his gratitude inspires.
Shall he for such deliverance freely wrought,
Recompense ill? He trembles at the thought.
His master's interest and his own combined
Prompt every movement of his heart and mind ;
Thought, word, and deed his liberty evince,
His freedom is the freedom of a prince.

Man's obligations infinite, of course
His life should prove, that he perceives their force :
His utmost he can render is but small—
The principle and motive all in all.
You have two servants—Tom, an arch sly rogue,
From top to toe the Geta now in vogue ;
Genteel in figure, easy in address,
Moves without noise, and swift as an express ;
Reports a message with a pleasing grace ;
Expert in all the duties of his place ;
Say, on what hinge does his obedience move?
Has he a world of gratitude and love?
No, not a spark—'tis all mere sharper's play ;
He likes your house, your housemaid, and your pay ;
Reduce his wages, or get rid of her,
Tom quits you, with—your most obedient, Sir.

The dinner served, Charles takes his usual stand,
Watches your eye, anticipates command ;
Sighs if perhaps your appetite should fail !
And, if he but suspects a frown, turns pale ;
Consults all day your interest and your ease,
Richly rewarded if he can but please ;
And, proud to make his firm attachment known,
To save your life, would nobly risk his own.

Now which stands highest in your serious thought?

Charles, without doubt, say you—and so he ought;
One act, that from a thankful heart proceeds,
Excels ten thousand mercenary deeds.

Thus Heaven approves as honest and sincere
The work of generous love and filial fear;
But with averted eyes the' omniscient Judge
Scorns the base hireling, and the slavish drudge:

Where dwell these matchless saints? old Curio
cries.

E'en at your side, Sir, and before your eyes,
The favour'd few—the' enthusiasts you despise;
And pleased at heart, because on holy ground
Sometimes a canting hypocrite is found,
Reproach a people with a single fall,
And cast his filthy raiment at them all.
Attend!—an apt similitude shall show,
Whence springs the conduct that offends you so.

See where it smokes along the sounding plain,
Blown all aslant, a driving, dashing rain,
Peal upon peal redoubling all around,
Shakes it again and faster to the ground;
Now flashing wide, now glancing as in play,
Swift beyond thought the lightnings dart away.
Ere yet it came, the traveller urged his steed,
And hurried, but with unsuccessful speed;
Now, drench'd throughout and hopeless of his case,
He drops the rein, and leaves him to his pace.
Suppose, unlook'd for in a scene so rude,
Long hid by interposing hill or wood,
Some mansion, neat and elegantly dress'd,
By some kind hospitable heart possess'd,
Offer him warmth, security, and rest;

Think with what pleasure, safe and at his ease,
He hears the tempest howling in the trees;
What glowing thanks his lips and heart employ,
While danger past is turn'd to present joy.
So fares it with the sinner, when he feels
A growing dread of vengeance at his heels:
His conscience, like a glassy lake before,
Lash'd into foaming waves begins to roar;
The law grown clamorous, though silent long,
Arraigns him—charges him with every wrong—
Asserts the rights of his offended Lord,
And death or restitution is the word:
The last impossible, he fears the first,
And, having well deserved, expects the worst.
Then welcome refuge, and a peaceful home;
O, for a shelter from the wrath to come!
Crush me, ye rocks; ye falling mountains, hide;
Or bury me in ocean's angry tide.—
The scrutiny of those all seeing eyes
I dare not—and you need not, God replies;
The remedy you want I freely give:
The book shall teach you—read, believe, and live!
'Tis done—the raging storm is heard no more,
Mercy receives him on her peaceful shore:
And Justice, guardian of the dread command,
Drops the red vengeance from his willing hand.
A soul redeem'd demands a life of praise;
Hence the complexion of his future days,
Hence a demeanour holy and unspeck'd,
And the world's hatred, as its sure effect.
Some lead a life unblamable and just,
Their own dear virtue their unshaken trust:
They never sin—or if (as all offend)
Some trivial slips their daily walk attend,

The poor are near at hand, the charge is small,
A slight gratuity atones for all.
For though the pope has lost his interest here,
And pardons are not sold as once they were,
No papist more desirous to compound,
Than some grave sinners upon English ground.
That plea refuted, other quirks they seek—
Mercy is infinite, and man is weak;
The future shall obliterate the past,
And Heaven no doubt shall be their home at last.

Come then—a still small whisper in your ear—
He has no hope, who never had a fear;
And he that never doubted of his state,
He may perhaps—perhaps he may—too late.
The path to bliss abounds with many a snare;
Learning is one, and wit, however rare.
The Frenchman, first in literary fame,
(Mention him if you please. Voltaire?—The same.)
With spirit, genius, eloquence, supplied,
Lived long, wrote much, laugh'd heartily, and died;
The Scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew
Bon mots to gall the Christian and the Jew;
An infidel in health, but what when sick?
O—then a text would touch him at the quick;
View him at Paris in his last career,
Surrounding throngs the demigod revere;
Exalted on his pedestal of pride,
And fumed with frankincense on every side,
He begs their flattery with his latest breath,
And, smother'd in't at last, is praised to death.

Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little store;
Content though mean, and cheerful if not gay,
Shuffling her threads about the livelong day,

Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light;
She for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Has little understanding and no wit,
Receives no praise; but though her lot be such,
(Toilsome and indigent) she renders much;
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew;
And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
Her title to a treasure in the skies.

O happy peasant! O unhappy bard!
His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward;
He praised perhaps for ages yet to come,
She never heard of half a mile from home:
He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,
She safe in the simplicity of hers.

Not many wise, rich, noble, or profound
In science, win one inch of heavenly ground.
And is it not a mortifying thought,
The poor should gain it, and the rich should not?
No—the voluptuaries, who ne'er forget
One pleasure lost, lose Heaven without regret;
Regret would rouse them, and give birth to prayer,
Prayer would add faith, and faith would fix them
Not that the Former of us all in this, [there.
Or aught he does, is govern'd by caprice:
The supposition is replete with sin,
And bears the brand of blasphemy burn'd in.
Not so—the silver trumpet's heavenly call
Sounds for the poor, but sounds alike for all;
Kings are invited, and would kings obey,
No slaves on earth more welcome were than they:
But royalty, nobility, and state
Are such a dead preponderating weight,

That endless bliss (how strange soe'er it seem),
In counterpoise, flies up and kicks the beam.
'Tis open, and ye cannot enter—why?
Because ye will not, Conyers would reply—
And he says much, that many may dispute
And cavil at with ease, but none refute.
O bless'd effect of penury and want,
The seed sown there, how vigorous is the plant!
No soil like poverty for growth divine,
As leanest land supplies the richest wine.
Earth gives too little, giving only bread,
To nourish pride, or turn the weakest head;
To them the sounding jargon of the schools
Seems what it is—a cap and bells for fools;
The light they walk by, kindled from above,
Shows them the shortest way to life and love:
They, strangers to the controversial field,
Where deists, always foil'd, yet scorn to yield,
And never check'd by what impedes the wise,
Believe, rush forward, and possess the prize.

Envy, ye great, the dull unletter'd small:
Ye have much cause for envy—but not all.
We boast some rich ones, whom the Gospel sways,
And one who wears a coronet and prays;
Like gleanings of an olive tree they show
Here and there one upon the topmost bough.

How readily, upon the Gospel plan,
That question has its answer—What is man?
Sinful and weak, in every sense a wretch:
An instrument, whose chords upon the stretch,
And strain'd to the last screw that he can bear,
Yield only discord in his Maker's ear:
Once the bless'd residence of truth divine,
Glorious as Solyma's interior shrine,

Where, in his own oracular abode,
Dwelt visibly the light-creating God;
But made long since, like Babylon of old,
A den of mischiefs never to be told:
And she once mistress of the realms around,
Now scatter'd wide and no where to be found,
As soon shall rise and reascend the throne,
By native power and energy her own,
As Nature at her own peculiar cost,
Restore to man the glories he has lost.
Go—bid the winter cease to chill the year,
Replace the wandering comet in his sphere,
Then boast (but wait for that unhop'd for hour)
The self-restoring arm of human power.
But what is man in his own proud esteem?
Hear him—himself the poet and the theme:
A monarch clothed with majesty and awe,
His mind his kingdom, and his will his law,
Grace in his mien, and glory in his eyes,
Supreme on Earth, and worthy of the skies,
Strength in his heart, dominion in his nod,
And, thunderbolts excepted, quite a god!
So sings he, charm'd with his own mind and form,
The song magnificent—the theme a worm!
Himself so much the source of his delight,
His Maker has no beauty in his sight.
See where he sits contemplative and fix'd,
Pleasure and wonder in his features mix'd:
His passions tamed and all at his control,
How perfect the composure of his soul!
Complacency has breathed a gentle gale
O'er all his thoughts, and swell'd his easy sail:
His books well trimm'd and in the gayest style,
Like regimented coxcombs rank and file,

Adorn his intellects as well as shelves,
And teach him notions splendid as themselves:
The Bible only stands neglected there,
Though that of all most worthy of his care;
And, like an infant troublesome awake,
Is left to sleep for peace and quiet sake.

What shall the man deserve of humankind,
Whose happy skill and industry combined
Shall prove (what argument could never yet)
The Bible an imposture and a cheat?
The praises of the libertine profess'd,
The worst of men, and curses of the best.
Where should the living, weeping o'er his woes,
The dying, trembling at the awful close,
Where the betray'd, forsaken, and oppress'd;
The thousands whom the world forbids to rest,
Where should they find (those comforts at an end
The Scripture yields), or hope to find, a friend?
Sorrow might muse herself to madness then,
And, seeking exile from the sight of men,
Bury herself in solitude profound,
Grow frantic with her pangs, and bite the ground.
Thus often Unbelief, grown sick of life,
Flies to the tempting pool, or felon knife.
The jury meet, the coroner is short,
And lunacy the verdict of the court;
Reverse the sentence, let the truth be known,
Such lunacy is ignorance alone:
They knew not, what some bishops may not know,
That Scripture is the only cure of woe:
That field of promise, how it flings abroad
Its odour o'er the Christian's thorny road!
The soul, reposing on assured relief,
Feels herself happy amidst all her grief,

Forgets her labour as she toils along,
Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song.

But the same word, that, like the polish'd share,
Ploughs up the roots of a believer's care,
Kills too the flowery weeds, where'er they grow,
That bind the sinner's Bacchanalian brow.

Oh that unwelcome voice of heavenly love,
Sad messenger of mercy from above!

How does it grate upon his thankless ear,
Crippling his pleasures with the cramp of fear!
His will and judgment at continual strife,
That civil war imbitters all his life:

In vain he points his powers against the skies,
In vain he closes or averts his eyes,
Truth will intrude—she bids him yet beware:
And shakes the sceptic in the scorner's chair.

Though various foes against the truth combine,
Pride above all opposes her design;
Pride, of a growth superior to the rest,
The subtlest serpent with the loftiest crest,
Swells at the thought, and, kindling into rage,
Would hiss the cherub Mercy from the stage.

And is the soul indeed so lost?—she cries,
Fallen from her glory and too weak to rise?
Torpida and dull beneath a frozen zone,
Has she no spark that may be deem'd her own?
Grant her indebted to what zealot's call
Grace undeserved, yet surely not for all—
Some beams of rectitude she yet displays,
Some love of virtue, and some power to praise;
Can lift herself above corporeal things,
And, soaring on her own unborrow'd wings,
Possess herself of all that's good or true,
Assert the skies, and vindicate her due.

Past indiscretion is a venial crime,
And if the youth, unmellow'd yet by time,
Bore on his branch luxuriant then and rude
Fruits of a blighted size, austere and erude,
Maturer years shall happier stores produce,
And meliorate the well concocted juice.
Then, conscious of her meritorious zeal,
To Justice she may make her bold appeal,
And leave to Mercy, with a tranquil mind,
The worthless and unfruitful of mankind.
Hear then how Mercy, slighted and defied,
Retorts the' affront against the crown of Pride.

Perish the virtue, as it ought, abhorr'd,
And the fool with it who insults his Lord.
The atonement a Redeemer's love has wrought
Is not for you—the righteous need it not.
Seest thou yon harlot wooing all she meets,
The worn out nuisance of the public streets,
Herself from morn to night, from night to morn,
Her own abhorrence, and as much your scorn;
The gracious shower, unlimited and free,
Shall fall on her, when Heaven denies it thee.
Of all that wisdom dictates this the drift,
That man is dead in sin, and life a gift.

Is virtue then, unless of Christian growth,
Mere fallacy, or foolishness, or both?
Ten thousand sages lost in endless woe,
For ignorance of what they could not know?
That speech betrays at once a bigot's tongue,
Charge not a God with such outrageous wrong.
Truly not I—the partial light men have,
My creed persuades me, well employ'd may save;
While he that scorns the noonday beam, perverse,
Shall find the blessing unimproved a curse.

Let heathen worthies, whose exalted mind
Left sensuality and dross behind,
Possess for me their undisputed lot,
And take unenvied the reward they sought.
But still in virtue of a Saviour's plea,
Not blind by choice, but destined not to see.
Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame
Celestial, though they knew not whence it came,
Derived from the same source of light and grace,
That guides the Christian in his swifter race;
Their judge was Conscience, and her rule their law,
That rule, pursued with reverence and with awe,
Led them, however faltering, faint, and slow,
From what they knew, to what they wish'd to know.
But let not him that shares a brighter day,
Traduce the splendour of a noontide ray,
Prefer the twilight of a darker time,
And deem his base stupidity no crime;
The wretch, who slights the bounty of the skies,
And sinks, while favour'd with the means to rise,
Shall find them rated at their full amount,
The good he scorn'd all carried to account.

Marshaling all his terrors as he came,
Thunder, and earthquake, and devouring flame,
From Sinai's top Jehovah gave the law,
Life for obedience, death for every flaw.
When the great Sovereign would his will express,
He gives a perfect rule; what can he less?
And guards it with a sanction as severe
As vengeance can inflict, or sinners fear:
Else his own glorious rights he would disclaim,
And man might safely trifle with his name.
He bids him glow with unremitting love
To all on earth, and to himself above;

Condemns the' injurious deed, the slanderous
tongue,

The thought that meditates a brother's wrong:
Brings not alone the more conspicuous part,
His conduct, to the test, but tries his heart.

Hark! universal Nature shook and groan'd;
'Twas the last trumpet—see the Judge enthroned!
Rouse all your courage at your utmost need,
Now summon every virtue, stand and plead.
What! silent? Is your boasting heard no more?
That self-renouncing wisdom, learn'd before,
Had shed immortal glories on your brow,
That all your virtues cannot purchase now.

All joy to the believer! he can speak—
Trembling yet happy, confident yet meek.
Since the dear hour, that brought me to thy foot,
And cut up all my follies by the root,
I never trusted in an arm but thine,
Nor hoped but in thy righteousness divine:
My prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled,
Were but the feeble efforts of a child;
Howe'er perform'd, it was their brightest part,
That they proceeded from a grateful heart;
Cleansed in thine own all-purifying blood,
Forgive their evil, and accept their good;
I cast them at thy feet—my only plea
Is what it was, dependance upon thee;
While struggling in the vale of tears below,
That never fail'd, nor shall it fail me now.

Angelic gratulations rend the skies,
Pride falls unpitied, never more to rise,
Humility is crown'd, and Faith receives the prize.

EXPOSTULATION.

Tantane, tam patiens, nullo certamine tolli
Dona sines?

VIRGIL.

WHY weeps the Muse for England? What appears
In England's case, to move the Muse to tears?
From side to side of her delightful isle
Is she not clothed with a perpetual smile?
Can Nature add a charm, or art confer
A new found luxury not seen in her?
Where under Heaven is pleasure more pursued,
Or where does cold reflection less intrude?
Her fields a rich expanse of wavy corn,
Pour'd out from Plenty's overflowing horn;
Ambrosial gardens, in which Art supplies
The fervour and the force of Indian skies;
Her peaceful shores, where busy Commerce waits
To pour his golden tide through all her gates;
Whom fiery suns, that scorch the russet spice
Of eastern groves, and oceans floor'd with ice
Forbid in vain to push his daring way
To darker climes, or climes of brighter day;
Whom the winds waft where'er the billows roll,
From the world's girdle to the frozen pole;
The chariots bounding in her wheel-worn streets;
Her vaults below, where every vintage meets;
Her theatres, her revels, and her sports;
The scenes to which not youth alone resorts,
But age, in spite of weakness and of pain,
Still haunts, in hope to dream of youth again;

All speak her happy: let the Muse look round
From East to West, no sorrow can be found:
Or only what, in cottages confined,
Sighs unregarded to the passing wind.
Then wherefore weep for England? What appears
In England's case to move the Muse to tears?

The prophet wept for Israel; wish'd his eyes
Were fountains fed with infinite supplies:
For Israel dealt in robbery and wrong:
There were the scorner's and the slanderer's
tongue;

Oaths, used as playthings or convenient tools,
As interest bias'd knaves, or fashion fools;
Adultery, neighing at his neighbour's door;
Oppression, labouring hard to grind the poor;
The partial balance, and deceitful weight;
The treacherous smile, a mask for secret hate;
Hypocrisy, formality in prayer,
And the dull service of the lip were there.
Her women, insolent and self-caress'd,
By Vanity's unwearied finger dress'd,
Forgot the blush that virgin fears impart
To modest cheeks, and borrow'd one from art;
Were just such trifles without worth or use,
As silly pride and idleness produce;
Curl'd, scented, furbelow'd, and flounced around,
With feet too delicate to touch the ground,
They stretch'd the neck, and roll'd the wanton eye,
And sigh'd for every fool that flutter'd by.

He saw his people slaves to every lust,
Lewd, avaricious, arrogant, unjust;
He heard the wheels of an avenging God
Groan heavily along the distant road:
Saw Babylon set wide her two-leaved brass,
To let the military deluge pass;

Jerusalem a prey, her glory soil'd,
Her princes captive, and her treasures spoil'd;
Wept till all Israel heard his bitter cry,
Stamp'd with his foot, and smote upon his thigh;
But wept, and stamp'd, and smote his thigh in vain,
Pleasure is deaf when told of future pain,
And sounds prophetic are too rough to suit
Ears long accusom'd to the pleasing lute;
They scorn'd his inspiration and his theme,
Pronounced him frantic, and his fears a dream;
With self-indulgence wing'd the fleeting hours,
Till the foe found them, and down fell the towers.

Long time Assyria bound them in her chain,
Till penitence had purged the public stain,
And Cyrus, with relenting pity moved,
Return'd them happy to the land they loved;
There, proof against prosperity, a while
They stood the test of her ensnaring smile,
And had the grace in scenes of peace to show
The virtue they had learn'd in scenes of woe.
But man is frail, and can but ill sustain
A long immunity from grief and pain;
And, after all the joys that Plenty leads,
With tiptoe step Vice silently succeeds.

When he that ruled them with a shepherd's rod,
In form a man, in dignity a God,
Came, not expected in that humble guise,
To sift and search them with unerring eyes,
He found, conceal'd beneath a fair outside,
The filth of rottenness, and worm of pride;
Their piety a system of deceit,
Scripture employ'd to sanctify the cheat;
The pharisee the dupe of his own art,
Self-idolized, and yet a knave at heart.

When nations are to perish in their sins,
'Tis in the church the leprosy begins;
The priest, whose office is with zeal sincere
To watch the fountain, and preserve it clear,
Carelessly nods and sleeps upon the brink,
While others poison what the flock must drink;
Or, waking at the call of lust alone,
Infuses lies and errors of his own.
His unsuspecting sheep believe it pure;
And, tainted by the very means of cure,
Catch from each other a contagious spot,
The foul forerunner of a general rot.
Then Truth is hush'd, that Heresy may preach;
And all is trash that Reason cannot reach:
Then God's own image on the soul impress'd
Becomes a mockery and a standing jest;
And faith, the root whence only can arise
The graces of a life that wins the skies,
Loses at once all value and esteem,
Pronounced by graybeards a pernicious dream;
Then Ceremony leads her bigots forth,
Prepared to fight for shadows of no worth;
While truths, on which eternal things depend,
Find not, or hardly find, a single friend;
As soldiers watch the signal of command,
They learn to bow, to kneel, to sit, to stand;
Happy to fill Religion's vacant place
With hollow form, and gesture, and grimace.
Such, when the Teacher of his church was there,
People and priest, the sons of Israel were;
Stiff in the letter, lax in the design
And import of their oracles divine;
Their learning legendary, false, absurd,
And yet exalted above God's own word;

They drew a curse from an intended good,
Puff'd up with gifts they never understood.
He judg'd them with as terrible a frown,
As if not love, but wrath had brought him down :
Yet he was gentle as soft summer airs,
Had grace for others' sins, but none for theirs;
Through all he spoke a noble plainness ran—
Rhetoric is artifice, the work of man;
And tricks and turns, that fancy may devise,
Are far too mean for Him that rules the skies.
The' astonish'd vulgar trembled while he tore
The mask from faces never seen before;
He stripp'd the' impostors in the noonday sun,
Show'd that they follow'd all they seem'd to shun;
Their prayers made public, their excesses kept
As private as the chambers where they slept;
The temple and its holy rites profaned
By mummeries he that dwelt in it disdain'd;
Uplifted hands, that, at convenient times,
Could act extortion and the worst of crimes,
Wash'd with a neatness scrupulously nice,
And free from every taint but that of vice.
Judgment, however tardy, mends her pace
When Obstinacy once has conquer'd Grace.
They saw distemper heal'd, and life restored,
In answer to the fiat of his word;
Confess'd the wonder, and with daring tongue
Blasphemed the' authority from which it sprung.
They knew by sure prognostics seen on high,
The future tone and temper of the sky;
But, grave dissemblers! could not understand,
That Sin let loose speaks punishment at hand.

Ask now of history's authentic page,
And call up evidence from every age;

Display with busy and laborious hand
The blessings of the most indebted land;
What nation will you find whose annals prove
So rich an interest in almighty love;
Where dwell they now, where dwelt in ancient day,
A people planted, water'd, bless'd as they?
Let Egypt's plagues and Canaan's woes proclaim
The favours pour'd upon the Jewish name;
Their freedom purchased for them at the cost
Of all their hard oppressors valued most;
Their title to a country not their own
Made sure by prodigies till then unknown;
For them the states they left made waste and void;
For them the states to which they went destroy'd;
A cloud to measure out their march by day,
By night a fire to cheer the gloomy way;
That moving signal summoning, when best,
Their host to move, and, when it stay'd, to rest.
For them the rocks dissolved into a flood,
The dews condensed into angelic food,
Their very garments sacred, old yet new,
And Time forbid to touch them as he flew;
Streams, swell'd above the bank, enjoin'd to stand,
While they pass'd through to their appointed land;
Their leader arm'd with meekness, zeal, and love,
And graced with clear credentials from above;
Themselves secured beneath the' Almighty wing;
Their God their captain¹, lawgiver, and king;
Crown'd with a thousand victories, and at last
Lords of the conquer'd soil, there rooted fast,
In peace possessing what they won by war,
Their name far publish'd, and revered as far;

¹ See Joshua v. 14.

Where will you find a race like theirs, endow'd
With all that man e'er wish'd, or Heaven bestow'd?

They, and they only amongst all mankind
Received the transcript of the' eternal mind;
Were trusted with his own engraven laws,
And constituted guardians of his cause;
Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,
And theirs by birth the Saviour of us all.
In vain the nations, that had seen them rise
With fierce and envious yet admiring eyes,
Had sought to crush them, guarded as they were
By power divine and skill that could not err.
Had they maintain'd allegiance firm and sure,
And kept the faith immaculate and pure,
Then the proud eagles of all-conquering Rome
Had found one city not to be o'ercome;
And the twelve standards of the tribes unfurl'd
Had bid defiance to the warring world.
But grace abused brings forth the foulest deeds,
As richest soil the most luxuriant weeds.
Cured of the golden calves, their fathers' sin,
They set up self, that idle god, within;
View'd a Deliverer with disdain and hate,
Who left them still a tributary state;
Seized fast his hand, held out to set them free
From a worse yoke, and nail'd it to the tree;
There was the consummation and the crown,
The flower of Israel's infamy full blown;
Thence date their sad declension and their fall,
Their woes not yet repeal'd, thence date them all.

Thus fell the best instructed in her day,
And the most favour'd land, look where we may.
Philosophy indeed on Grecian eyes
Had pour'd the day, and clear'd the Roman skies;

In other climes perhaps creative Art,
With power surpassing theirs, perform'd her part,
Might give more life to marble, or might fill
The glowing tablets with a juster skill,
Might shine in fable, and grace idle themes
With all the' embroidery of poetic dreams;
'Twas theirs alone to dive into the plan,
That truth and mercy had reveal'd to man;
And while the world beside, that plan unknown,
Deified useless wood or senseless stone,
They breathed in faith their well directed prayers,
And the true God, the God of truth, was theirs.

Their glory faded, and their race dispersed,
The last of nations now, though once the first;
They warn and teach the proudest, would they
learn,

Keep wisdom, or meet vengeance in your turn :
If we escaped not, if Heaven spared not us,
Peel'd, scatter'd, and exterminated thus;
If Vice received her retribution due,
When we were visited, what hope for you?
When God arises with an awful frown,
To punish lust, or pluck presumption down;
When gifts perverted, or not duly prized,
Pleasure o'ervalued, and his grace despised,
Provoke the vengeance of his righteous hand,
To pour down wrath upon a thankless land;
He will be found impartially severe,
Too just to wink, or speak the guilty clear.
O Israel, of all nations most undone!
Thy diadem displaced, thy sceptre gone;
Thy temple, once thy glory, fallen and rased,
And thou a worshipper e'en where thou mayst;
Thy services once only without spot,
Mere shadows now, their ancient pomp forgot;

Thy Levites, once a consecrated host,
No longer Levites, and their lineage lost,
And, thou thyself o'er every country sown,
With none on earth that thou canst call thine own;
Cry aloud, thou that sittest in the dust,
Cry to the proud, the cruel, and unjust;
Knock at the gates of nations, rouse their fears;
Say wrath is coming, and the storm appears;
But raise the shrillest cry in British ears.

What ails thee, restless as the waves that roar,
And fling their foam against thy chalky shore?
Mistress, at least while Providence shall please,
And trident-bearing queen of the wide seas—
Why, having kept good faith, and often shown
Friendship and truth to others, find'st thou none?
Thou that hast set the persecuted free,
None interposes now to succour thee.
Countries indebted to thy power, that shine
With light derived from thee, would smother thine:
Thy very children watch for thy disgrace—
A lawless brood, and curse thee to thy face.
Thy rulers load thy credit, year by year,
With sums Peruvian mines could never clear;
As if, like arches built with skilful hand,
The more 'twere press'd the firmer it would stand.

The cry in all thy ships is still the same,
Speed us away to battle and to fame.
Thy mariners explore the wild expanse,
Impatient to descry the flags of France:
But, though they fight as thine have ever fought,
Return ashamed without the wreaths they sought.
Thy senate is a scene of civil jar,
Chaos of contrarieties at war;

Where sharp and solid, phlegmatic and light,
Discordant atoms meet, ferment, and fight;
Where Obstinacy takes his sturdy stand,
To disconcert what Policy has plann'd;
Where Policy is busied all night long
In setting right what Faction has set wrong;
Where flails of oratory thresh the floor,
That yields them chaff and dust, and nothing more.
Thy rack'd inhabitants repine, complain,
Tax'd till the brow of Labour sweats in vain;
War lays a burden on the reeling state,
And Peace does nothing to relieve the weight;
Successive loads succeeding broils impose,
And sighing millions prophesy the close.

Is adverse Providence, when ponder'd well,
So dimly writ, or difficult to spell,
Thou canst not read with readiness and ease
Providence adverse in events like these?
Know then that heavenly wisdom on this ball
Creates, gives birth to, guides, consummates all;
That, while laborious and quick-thoughted man
Snuffs up the praise of what he seems to plan,
He first conceives, then perfects his design,
As a mere instrument in hands divine:
Blind to the working of that secret power,
That balances the wings of every hour,
The busy trifler dreams himself alone,
Frames many a purpose, and God works his own.
States thrive or wither as moons wax and wane,
E'en as his will and his decrees ordain:
While honour, virtue, piety bear sway,
They flourish; and as these decline, decay.
In just resentment of his injured laws,
He pours contempt on them and on their cause;

Strikes the rough thread of error right athwart
The web of every scheme they have at heart;
Bids rottenness invade and bring to dust
The pillars of support, in which they trust,
And do his errand of disgrace and shame
On the chief strength and glory of the frame.
None ever yet impeded what he wrought,
None bars him out from his most secret thought;
Darkness itself before his eyes is light,
And Hell's close mischief naked in his sight.

Stand now and judge thyself.—Hast thou in-
curr'd

His anger, who can waste thee with a word,
Who poises and proportions sea and land,
Weighing them in the hollow of his hand,
And in whose awful sight all nations seem
As grasshoppers, as dust, a drop, a dream?
Hast thou (a sacrilege his soul abhors)
Claim'd all the glory of thy prosperous wars?
Proud of thy fleets and armies, stolen the gem
Of his just praise, to lavish it on them?
Hast thou not learn'd, what thou art often told,
A truth still sacred, and believed of old,
That no success depends on spears and swords
Unbless'd, and that the battle is the Lord's?
That Courage is his creature, and Dismay
The post that at his bidding speeds away,
Ghastly in feature, and his stammering tongue,
With doleful rumour and sad presage hung,
To quell the valour of the stoutest heart,
And teach the combatant a woman's part?
That he bids thousands fly when none pursue,
Saves as he will by many or by few,
And claims for ever, as his royal right,
The event and sure decision of the fight?

Hast thou, though suckled at fair Freedom's
breast,
Exported slavery to the conquer'd East,
Pull'd down the tyrants India served with dread,
And raised thyself, a greater, in their stead!
Gone thither arm'd and hungry, return'd full,
Fed from the richest veins of the Mogul,
A despot big with power obtain'd by wealth,
And that obtain'd by rapine and by stealth?
With Asiatic vices stored thy mind,
But left their virtues and thine own behind;
And, having truck'd thy soul, brought home the fee,
To tempt the poor to sell himself to thee?
Hast thou by statute shoved from its design
The Saviour's feast, his own bless'd bread and
wine,
And made the symbols of atoning grace
An office key, a picklock to a place,
That infidels may prove their title good
By an oath dipp'd in sacramental blood?
A blot that will be still a blot, in spite
Of all that grave apologists may write:
And though a bishop toil to cleanse the stain,
He wipes and scours the silver cup in vain.
And hast thou sworn on every slight pretence,
Till perjuries are common as bad pence,
While thousands careless of the damning sin,
Kiss the book's outside, who ne'er look'd within?
Hast thou, when Heaven has clothed thee
with disgrace,
And, long provoked, repaid thee to thy face
(For thou hast known eclipses, and endured
Dimness and anguish, all thy beams obscured,
When sin has shed dishonour on thy brow;
And never of a sabler hue than now),

Hast thou, with heart perverse, and conscience
 Despising all rebuke, still persevered, [sear'd,
 And, having chosen evil, scorn'd the voice
 That cried, Repent! and gloried in thy choice?
 Thy fastings, when calamity at last
 Suggests the' expedient of a yearly fast,
 What mean they? Canst thou dream there is a
 In lighter diet at a later hour, [power
 To charm to sleep the threatening of the skies,
 And hide past folly from all-seeing eyes?
 The fast, that wins deliverance, and suspends
 The stroke, that a vindictive God intends,
 Is to renounce hypocrisy: to draw
 Thy life upon the pattern of the law;
 To war with pleasure, idolized before;
 To vanquish lust, and wear its yoke no more.
 All fasting else, whate'er be the pretence,
 Is wooing mercy by renew'd offence.

Hast thou within thee sin, that in old time
 Brought fire from Heaven, the sex-abusing crime,
 Whose horrid perpetration stamps disgrace,
 Baboons are free from, upon human race?
 Think on the fruitful and well water'd spot,
 That fed the flocks and herds of wealthy Lot,
 Where Paradise seem'd still vouchsafed on earth,
 Burning and scorch'd into perpetual dearth,
 Or, in his words who damn'd the base desire,
 Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire;
 Then Nature injured, scandalized, defiled,
 Unveil'd her blushing cheek, look'd on, and smiled;
 Beheld with joy the lovely scene defaced,
 And praised the wrath that laid her beauties waste.

Far be the thought from any verse of mine,
 And farther still the form'd and fix'd design,

To thrust the charge of deeds that I detest,
Against an innocent unconscious breast:
The man that dares traduce, because he can
With safety to himself, is not a man:
An individual is a sacred mark,
Not to be pierced in play, or in the dark;
But public censure speaks a public foe,
Unless a zeal for virtue guide the blow.

The priestly brotherhood, devout, sincere,
From mean self-interest and ambition clear,
Their hope in Heaven, servility their scorn,
Prompt to persuade, expostulate, and warn,
Their wisdom pure, and given them from above,
Their usefulness ensured by zeal and love,
As meek as the man Moses, and withal
As bold as in Agrippa's presence Paul,
Should fly the World's contaminating touch,
Holy and unpolluted:—are thine such?
Except a few with Eli's spirit bless'd,
Hophni and Phineas may describe the rest.

Where shall a teacher look, in days like these,
For ears and hearts, that he can hope to please?
Look to the poor—the simple, and the plain
Will hear perhaps thy salutary strain:
Humility is gentle, apt to learn,
Speak but the word, will listen and return.
Alas, not so! the poorest of the flock
Are proud, and set their faces as a rock;
Denied that earthly opulence they choose,
God's better gift they scoff at and refuse.
The rich, the produce of a nobler stem,
Are more intelligent at least, try them.
O vain inquiry! they without remorse
Are altogether gone a devious course;

Where beckoning Pleasure leads them, wildly
stray;
Have burst the bands, and cast the yoke away.
Now, borne upon the wings of truth sublime,
Review thy dim original and prime.
This island, spot of unreclaim'd rude earth,
The cradle that received thee at thy birth,
Was rock'd by many a rough Norwegian blast,
And Danish howlings scared thee as they pass'd;
For thou wast born amid the din of arms,
And suck'd a breast that panted with alarms.
While yet thou wast a groveling puling chit,
Thy bones not fashion'd, and thy joints not knit,
The Roman taught thy stubborn knee to bow,
Though twice a Cæsar could not bend thee now :
His victory was that of orient light,
When the sun's shafts disperse the gloom of night.
Thy language at this distant moment shows
How much the country to the conqueror owes;
Expressive, energetic, and refined,
It sparkles with the gems he left behind :
He brought thy land a blessing when he came,
He found thee savage, and he left thee tame;
Taught thee to clothe thy pink'd and painted hide,
And grace thy figure with a soldier's pride;
He sow'd the seeds of order where he went,
Improved thee far beyond his own intent,
And, while he ruled thee by the sword alone,
Made thee at last a warrior like his own.
Religion, if in heavenly truths attired,
Needs only to be seen to be admired;
But thine, as dark as witcheries of the night,
Was form'd to harden hearts and shock the sight;
Thy Druids struck the well hung harps they bore
With fingers deeply dyed in human gore;

And, while the victim slowly bled to death,
Upon the rolling chords rung out his dying breath.

Who brought the lamp, that with awaking beams
Dispell'd thy gloom, and broke away thy dreams,
Tradition, now decrepit and worn out,
Babbler of ancient fables, leaves a doubt:
But still light reach'd thee; and those gods of
thine,

Woden and Thor, each tottering in his shrine,
Fell broken and defaced at his own door,
As Dagon in Philistia long before.

But Rome with sorceries and magic wand
Soon raised a cloud that darken'd every land;
And thine was smother'd in the stench and fog
Of Tyber's marshes and the papal bog.
Then priests with bulls and briefs, and shaven
crowns,

And griping fists, and unrelenting frowns,
Legates and delegates with powers from Hell,
Though heavenly in pretension, fleeced thee well;
And to this hour, to keep it fresh in mind,
Some twigs of that old scourge are left behind².
Thy soldiery, the pope's well managed pack,
Were train'd beneath his lash, and knew the smack;
And, when he laid them on the scent of blood,
Would hunt a Saracen through fire and flood.
Lavish of life to win an empty tomb,
That proved a mint of wealth, a mine to Rome,
They left their bones beneath unfriendly skies,
His worthless absolution all the prize.
Thou wast the veriest slave in days of yore,
That ever dragg'd a chain, or tugg'd an oar;

² Which may be found at Doctor's Commons.

Thy monarchs arbitrary, fierce, unjust,
Themselves the slaves of bigotry or lust,
Disdain'd thy counsels, only in distress
Found thee a goodly sponge for Power to press.
Thy chiefs, the lords of many a petty fee,
Provoked and harass'd, in return plagued thee;
Call'd thee away from peaceable employ,
Domestic happiness and rural joy,
To waste thy life in arms, or lay it down
In causeless feuds and bickerings of their own.
Thy parliaments adored on bended knees
The sovereignty, they were convened to please;
Whate'er was ask'd, too timid to resist,
Complied with, and were graciously dismiss'd;
And if some Spartan soul a doubt express'd,
And, blushing at the tameness of the rest,
Dared to suppose the subject had a choice,
He was a traitor by the general voice.
O slave! with powers thou didst not dare exert,
Verse cannot stoop so low as thy desert;
It shakes the sides of splenetic Disdain,
Thou self-entitled ruler of the main,
To trace thee to the date when yon fair sea,
That clips thy shores, had no such charms for thee;
When other nations flew from coast to coast,
And thou hadst neither fleet nor flag to boast.
Kneel now, and lay thy forehead in the dust;
Blush if thou canst; not petrified, thou must;
Act but an honest and a faithful part;
Compare what then thou wast with what thou art;
And God's disposing providence confess'd,
Obduracy itself must yield the rest—
Then thou art bound to serve him, and to prove,
Hour after hour, thy gratitude and love.

Has he not hid thee, and thy favour'd land,
For ages safe beneath his sheltering hand,
Given thee his blessing on the clearest proof,
Bid nations leagu'd against thee stand aloof,
And charg'd Hostility and Hate to roar,
Where else they would, but not upon thy shore?
His power secur'd thee, when presumptuous Spain
Baptiz'd her fleet Invincible in vain;
Her gloomy monarch, doubtful and resign'd
To every pang that racks an anxious mind,
Ask'd of the waves, that broke upon his coast,
What tidings? and the surge replied—All lost!
And when the Stuart leaning on the Scot,
Then too much feared, and now too much forgot,
Pierced to the very centre of the realm,
And hop'd to seize his abdicated helm,
'Twas but to prove, how quickly with a frown
He that had rais'd thee could have pluck'd thee
Peculiar is the grace by thee possess'd, [down.
Thy foes implacable, thy land at rest;
Thy thunders travel over earth and seas,
And all at home is pleasure, wealth, and ease.
'Tis thus, extending his tempestuous arm,
Thy Maker fills the nations with alarm, [scene,
While his own Heaven surveys the troubled
And feels no change, unshaken and serene.
Freedom, in other lands scarce known to shine,
Pours out a flood of splendour upon thine;
Thou hast as bright an interest in her rays
As ever Roman had in Rome's best days.
True freedom is where no restraint is known,
That Scripture, Justice, and good Sense disown,
Where only Vice and Injury are tied,
And all from shore to shore is free beside.

Such freedom is—and Windsor's hoary towers
Stood trembling at the boldness of thy powers,
That won a nymph on that immortal plain,
Like her the fabled Phœbus woo'd in vain:
He found the laurel only—happier you,
The' unfading laurel and the virgin too³!

Now think, if Pleasure have a thought to spare;
If God himself be not beneath her care;
If business, constant as the wheels of time,
Can pause an hour to read a serious rhyme;
If the new mail thy merchants now receive,
Or expectation of the next give leave:
O, think, if chargeable with deep arrears
For such indulgence gilding all thy years,
How much, though long neglected, shining yet
The beams of heavenly truth have swell'd the debt.
When persecuting zeal made royal sport
With tortured innocence in Mary's court,
And Bonner, blithe as shepherd at a wake,
Enjoy'd the show, and danced about the stake;
The sacred book, its value understood,
Received the seal of martyrdom in blood.
Those holy men, so full of truth and grace,
Seem to reflection of a different race,
Meek, modest, venerable, wise, sincere,
In such a cause they could not dare to fear;
They could not purchase earth with such a prize,
Or spare a life too short to reach the skies.
From them to thee convey'd along the tide,
Their streaming hearts pour'd freely when they
died.

³ Alluding to the grant of Magna Charta, which was extorted from king John by the barons, at Runnymede, near Windsor.

Those truths which neither use nor years impair,
Invite thee, woo thee, to the bliss they share.
What dotage will not Vanity maintain?
What web too weak to catch a modern brain?
The moles and bats in full assembly find,
On special search the keen-eyed eagle blind.
And did they dream, and art thou wiser now?
Prove it—if better, I submit and bow.
Wisdom and Goodness are twin born, one heart
Must hold both sisters, never seen apart.
So then—as darkness overspread the deep,
Ere Nature rose from her eternal sleep,
And this delightful earth, and that fair sky,
Leap'd out of nothing, call'd by the Most High:
By such a change thy darkness is made light,
Thy chaos order, and thy weakness might;
And He, whose power mere nullity obeys,
Who found thee nothing, form'd thee for his praise.
To praise him is to serve him, and fulfil,
Doing and suffering, his unquestion'd will;
'Tis to believe what men inspired of old,
Faithful, and faithfully inform'd, unfold;
Candid and just, with no false aim in view,
To take for truth what cannot but be true;
To learn in God's own school the Christian part,
And bind the task assign'd thee to thine heart.
Happy the man there seeking and there found,
Happy the nation where such men abound.

How shall a verse impress thee; by what name
Shall I adjure thee not to court thy shame?
By theirs, whose bright example unimpeach'd
Directs thee to that eminence they reach'd,
Heroes and worthies of days past, thy sires?
Or his, who touch'd their hearts with hallow'd fires?

Their names, alas! in vain reproach an age,
Whom all the vanities they scorn'd engage;
And his, that seraphs trembled at, is hung
Disgracefully on every trifler's tongue,
Or serves the champion in forensic war
To flourish and parade with at the bar.
Pleasure herself perhaps suggests a plea,
If interest move thee, to persuade e'en thee;
By every charm that smiles upon her face,
By joys possess'd, and joys still held in chase,
If dear society be worth a thought,
And if the feast of freedom cloy thee not,
Reflect that these, and all that seems thine own,
Held by the tenure of his will alone,
Like angels in the service of their Lord,
Remain with thee, or leave thee at his word;
That gratitude and temperance in our use
Of what he gives unsparing and profuse,
Secure the favour, and enhance the joy,
That thankless waste and wild abuse destroy.
But above all reflect, how cheap soe'er
Those rights, that millions envy thee, appear,
And though resolved to risk them, and swim down
The tide of pleasure heedless of His frown,
That blessings truly sacred, and, when given,
Mark'd with the signature and stamp of Heaven,
The word of prophecy, those truths divine,
Which make that Heaven, if thou desire it, thine,
(Awful alternative! believed, beloved,
Thy glory; and thy shame if unimproved)
Are never long vouchsafed, if push'd aside
With cold disgust or philosophic pride;
And that judicially withdrawn, disgrace,
Error, and darkness, occupy their place.

A world is up in arms, and thou, a spot
Not quickly found, if negligently sought,
Thy soul as ample as thy bounds are small,
Endurest the brunt, and darest defy them all:
And wilt thou join to this bold enterprise
A bolder still, a contest with the skies?
Remember, if he guard thee, and secure,
Whoe'er assails thee, the success is sure;
But if he leave thee, though the skill and power
Of nations, sworn to spoil thee and devour,
Were all collected in thy single arm,
And thou couldst laugh away the fear of harm,
That strength would fail opposed against the push
And feeble onset of a pigmy rush.

Say not (and if the thought of such defence
Should spring within thy bosom, drive it thence)
What nation amongst all my foes is free
From crimes as base as any charged on me?
Their measure fill'd, they too shall pay the debt,
Which God, though long forborn, will not forget.
But know that Wrath divine, when most severe,
Makes justice still the guide of his career,
And will not punish, in one mingled crowd,
Them without light, and thee without a cloud.

Muse, hang this harp upon yon aged beech,
Still murmuring with the solemn truths I teach:
And while at intervals a cold blast sings
Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the strings,
My soul shall sigh in secret and lament
A nation scourged, yet tardy to repent.
I know the warning song is sung in vain,
That few will hear and fewer heed the strain;
But if a sweeter voice, and one design'd
A blessing to my country and mankind,

Reclaim the wandering thousands, and bring home
A flock so scatter'd and so wont to roam,
Then place it once again between my knees;
The sound of truth will then be sure to please:
And truth alone, where'er my life be cast,
In scenes of plenty, or the pining waste,
Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last.

HOPE.

— doceas iter, et sacra ostia pandas.

VIRG. EN. 6.

ASK what is human life—the sage replies,
With disappointment lowering in his eyes,
A painful passage o'er a restless flood,
A vain pursuit of fugitive false good,
A scene of fancied bliss and heartfelt care,
Closing at last in darkness and despair.
The poor, inured to drudgery and distress,
Act without aim, think little, and feel less,
And no where, but in feign'd Arcadian scenes,
Taste happiness, or know what pleasure means.
Riches are pass'd away from hand to hand,
As fortune, vice, or folly may command;
As in a dance the pair that take the lead
Turn downward, and the lowest pair succeed,
So shifting and so various is the plan,
By which Heaven rules the mix'd affairs of man:
Vicissitude wheels round the motley crowd,
The rich grow poor, the poor become purse proud;

Business is labour, and man's weakness such,
 Pleasure is labour too, and tires as much.
 The very sense of it foregoes its use,
 By repetition pall'd, by age obtuse.
 Youth lost in dissipation, we deplore,
 Through life's sad remnant, what no sighs restore;
 Our years, a fruitless race without a prize,
 Too many, yet too few to make us wise.

Dangling his cane about, and taking snuff,
 Lothario cries, What philosophic stuff—
 O querulous and weak!—whose useless brain
 Once thought of nothing, and now thinks in vain;
 Whose eye reverted weeps o'er all the past,
 Whose prospect shows thee a disheartening waste;
 Would age in thee resign his wintry reign,
 And youth invigorate that frame again,
 Renew'd desire would grace with other speech
 Joys always prized, when placed within our reach.

For lift thy palsied head, shake off the gloom,
 That overhangs the borders of thy tomb,
 See Nature gay, as when she first began
 With smiles alluring her admirer man;
 She spreads the morning over eastern hills,
 Earth glitters with the drops the night distils:
 The Sun obedient at her call appears,
 To fling his glories o'er the robe she wears;
 Banks clothed with flowers, groves fill'd with
 sprightly sounds, [grounds,
 The yellow tilth, green meads, rocks, rising
 Streams edged with osiers, fattening every field
 Where'er they flow, now seen and now conceal'd;
 From the blue rim where skies and mountains meet,
 Down to the very turf beneath thy feet,
 Ten thousand charms, that only fools despise,
 Or pride can look at with indifferent eyes,

All speak one language, all with one sweet voice
Cry to her universal realm, Rejoice!
Man feels the spur of passions and desires,
And she gives largely more than he requires;
Not that his hours devoted all to Care,
Hollow-eyed Abstinence, and lean Despair,
The wretch may pine, while to his smell, taste,
She holds a paradise of rich delight; [sight,
But gently to rebuke his awkward fear,
To prove that what she gives, she gives sincere,
To banish hesitation, and proclaim
His happiness, her dear, her only aim.
'Tis grave Philosophy's absurdest dream,
That Heaven's intentions are not what they seem,
That only shadows are dispensed below,
And earth has no reality but woe.

Thus things terrestrial wear a different hue,
As youth or age persuades: and neither true:
So Flora's wreath through colour'd crystal seen,
The rose or lily appears blue or green,
But still the' imputed tints are those alone
The medium represents, and not their own.

To rise at noon, sit slipshod and undress'd,
To read the news, or fiddle, as seems best,
Till half the world comes rattling at his door,
To fill the dull vacuity till four;
And just when evening turns the blue vault gray,
To spend two hours in dressing for the day;
To make the Sun a bauble without use,
Save for the fruits his heavenly beams produce;
Quite to forget, or deem it worth no thought,
Who bids him shine, or if he shine or not;
Through mere necessity to close his eyes
Just when the larks and when the shepherds rise;

Is such a life, so tediously the same,
So void of all utility or aim,
That poor Jonquil, with almost every breath
Sighs for his exit, vulgarly called death;
For he, with all his follies, has a mind
Not yet so blank, or fashionably blind,
But now and then perhaps a feeble ray
Of distant wisdom shoots across his way,
By which he reads, that life without a plan,
As useless as the moment it began,
Serves merely as a soil for discontent
To thrive in; an incumbance ere half spent.
O weariness beyond what asses feel,
That tread the circuit of the cistern wheel;
A dull rotation, never at a stay,
Yesterday's face twin image of to-day;
While conversation, an exhausted stock,
Grows drowsy as the clicking of a clock.
No need, he cries, of gravity stuff'd out
With academic dignity devout,
To read wise lectures, vanity the text:
Proclaim the remedy, ye learned, next;
For truth self-evident, with pomp impress'd,
Is vanity surpassing all the rest.

That remedy, not hid in deeps profound,
Yet seldom sought where only to be found,
While passion turns aside from its due scope
The' inquirer's aim, that remedy is hope.
Life is His gift, from whom whate'er life needs,
With every good and perfect gift proceeds;
Bestow'd on man, like all that we partake,
Royally, freely, for his bounty's sake;
Transient, indeed, as is the fleeting hour,
And yet the seed of an immortal flower;

Design'd in honour of his endless love,
To fill with fragrance his abode above:
No trifle, howsoever short it seem,
And, howsoever shadowy, no dream;
Its value what no thought can ascertain,
Nor all an angel's eloquence explain.
Men deal with life, as children with their play,
Who first misuse, then cast their toys away;
Live to no sober purpose, and contend
That their Creator had no serious end.
When God and man stand opposite in view,
Man's disappointment must of course ensue,
The just Creator condescends to write,
In beams of inextinguishable light,
His names of wisdom, goodness, power, and love,
On all that blooms below or shines above;
To catch the wandering notice of mankind,
And teach the world, if not perversely blind,
His gracious attributes, and prove the share
His offspring hold in his paternal care.
If, led from earthly things to things divine,
His creature thwart not his august design,
Then praise is heard instead of reasoning pride,
And captious cavil and complaint subside.
Nature, employ'd in her allotted place,
Is handmaid to the purposes of Grace;
By good vouchsafed makes known superior good,
And bliss not seen by blessings understood:
That bliss reveal'd in Scripture, with a glow
Bright as the covenant-ensuring bow,
Fires all his feelings with a noble scorn
Of sensual evil, and thus Hope is born.

Hope sets the stamp of vanity on all,
That men have deem'd substantial since the fall,

Yet has the wondrous virtue to educe
From emptiness itself a real use;
And while she takes, as at a father's hand,
What health and sober appetite demand,
From fading good derives, with chemic art,
That lasting happiness, a thankful heart.
Hope with uplifted foot set free from earth,
Pants for the place of her etherial birth,
On steady wings sails through the' immense abyss,
Plucks amaranthine joys from bowers of bliss,
And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,
With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.
Hope, as an anchor firm and sure, holds fast
The Christian vessel, and defies the blast.
Hope! nothing else can nourish and secure
His newborn virtues, and preserve him pure.
Hope! let the wretch, once conscious of the joy,
Whom now despairing agonies destroy,
Speak, for he can, and none so well as he,
What treasures centre, what delights in thee.
Had he the gems, the spices, and the land,
That boasts the treasure, all at his command;
The fragrant grove, the' inestimable mine,
Were light, when weigh'd against one smile of
thine.

Though, clasp'd and cradled in his nurse's arms,
He shine with all a cherub's artless charms,
Man is the genuine offspring of revolt,
Stubborn and sturdy as a wild ass' colt;
His passions, like the watery stores that sleep
Beneath the smiling surface of the deep,
Wait but the lashes of a wintry storm,
To frown and roar, and shake his feeble form.
From infancy through childhood's giddy maze,
Froward at school, and fretful in his plays,

The puny tyrant burns to subjugate
The free republic of the whip-gig state.
If one, his equal in athletic frame,
Or, more provoking still, of nobler name,
Dare step across his arbitrary views,
An Iliad, only not in verse, ensues:
The little Greeks look trembling at the scales,
Till the best tongue, or heaviest hand prevails.

Now see him launch'd into the world at large;
If priest, supinely droning o'er his charge,
Their fleece his pillow, and his weekly drawl,
Though short, too long, the price he pays for all.
If lawyer, loud whatever cause he plead,
But proudest of the worst, if that succeed.
Perhaps a grave physician, gathering fees,
Punctually paid for lengthening out disease;
No Cotton, whose humanity sheds rays,
That make superior skill his second praise.
If arms engage him, he devotes to sport
His date of life, so likely to be short;
A soldier may be any thing, if brave;
So may a tradesman, if not quite a knave.
Such stuff the world is made of; and mankind
To passion, interest, pleasure, whim resign'd,
Insist on, as if each were his own pope,
Forgiveness and the privilege of hope.
But Conscience, in some awful silent hour,
When captivating lusts have lost their power,
Perhaps when sickness, or some fearful dream,
Reminds him of religion, hated theme!
Starts from the down, on which she lately slept,
And tells of laws despised, at least not kept:
Shows with a pointing finger, but no noise,
A pale procession of past sinful joys,

All witnesses of blessings foully scorn'd,
And life abused, and not to be suborn'd.
Mark these, she says; these, summon'd from afar,
Begin their march to meet thee at the bar;
There find a judge, inexorably just,
And perish there, as all presumption must.
Peace be to those (such peace as earth can give)
Who live in pleasure (dead e'en while they live;)
Born capable indeed of heavenly truth;
But down to latest age, from earliest youth,
Their mind a wilderness through want of care,
The plough of wisdom never entering there.
Peace (if insensibility may claim
A right to the meek honours of her name)
To men of pedigree; their noble race,
Emulous always of the nearest place
To any throne, except the throne of grace.
Let cottagers and unenlighten'd swains
Revere the laws they dream that Heaven ordains;
Resort on Sundays to the house of prayer,
And ask, and fancy they find blessings there.
Themselves, perhaps, when weary they retreat
To' enjoy cool nature in a country seat,
To' exchange the centre of a thousand trades,
For clumps, and lawns, and temples, and cascades,
May now and then their velvet cushions take,
And seem to pray, for good example sake;
Judging, in charity, no doubt the town
Pious enough, and having need of none.
Kind souls! to teach their tenantry to prize
What they themselves, without remorse, despise:
Nor hope have they, nor fear of aught to come,
As well for them had prophecy been dumb;
They could have held the conduct they pursue,
Had Paul of Tarsus lived and died a Jew,

And truth, proposed to reasoners wise as they,
Is a pearl cast—completely cast away.

They die.—Death lends them, pleased and as
in sport,

All the grim honours of his ghastly court.
Far other paintings grace the chamber now,
Where late we saw the mimic landscape glow:
The busy heralds hang the sable scene [tween;
With mournful scutcheons, and dim lamps be-
Proclaim their titles to the crowd around,
But they that wore them move not at the sound;
The coronet, placed idly at their head,
Adds nothing now to the degraded dead,
And e'en the star, that glitters on the bier,
Can only say—Nobility lies here.

Peace to all such—'twere pity to offend
By useless censure, whom we cannot mend;
Life without hope can close but in despair,
'Twas there we found them, and must leave them

As, when two pilgrims in a forest stray, [there.
Both may be lost, yet each in his own way;
So fares it with the multitudes beguiled
In vain Opinion's waste and dangerous wild;
Ten thousand rove the brakes and thorns among,
Some eastward, and some westward, and all
But here, alas! the fatal difference lies, [wrong.
Each man's belief is right in his own eyes;
And he that blames, what they have blindly chose,
Incurs resentment for the love he shows.

Say, botanist, within whose province fall
The cedar and the hyssop on the wall,
Of all that deck the lanes, the fields, the bowers,
What parts the kindred tribes of weeds and
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But brighter beams than his who fires the skies
Have risen at length on your admiring eyes,
That shoot into your darkest caves the day,
From which our nicer optics turn away.

Here see the 'encouragement Grace gives to vice,
The dire effect of mercy without price!
What were they? what some fools are made by art
They were by nature, atheists, head and heart.
The gross idolatry blind heathens teach
Was too refined for them, beyond their reach.
Not e'en the glorious Sun, though men revere
The monarch most that seldom will appear,
And though his beams, that quicken where they
shine,

May claim some right to be esteem'd divine,
Not e'en the Sun, desirable as rare,
Could bend one knee, engage one votary there;
They were, what base credulity believes
True Christians are, dissemblers, drunkards,
thieves.

The full-gorged savage, at his nauseous feast
Spent half the darkness, and snored out the rest,
Was one whom justice, on an equal plan
Denouncing death upon the sins of man,
Might almost have indulged with an escape,
Chargeable only with a human shape.

What are they now?—Morality may spare
Her grave concern, her kind suspicions there:
The wretch, who once sang wildly, danced and
laugh'd,
And suck'd in dizzy madness with his draught,
Has wept a silent flood, reversed his ways,
Is sober, meek, benevolent, and prays,

Feeds sparingly, communicates his store,
Abhors the craft he boasted of before,
And he that stole has learn'd to steal no more.
Well spake the prophet, Let the desert sing,
Where sprang the thorn the spiry fir shall spring,
And where unsightly and rank thistles grew
Shall grow the myrtle and luxuriant yew.

Go now, and with important tone demand
On what foundation virtue is to stand,
If self-exalting claims be turn'd adrift,
And grace be grace indeed, and life a gift:
The poor reclaim'd inhabitant, his eyes
Glistening at once with pity and surprise,
Amazed that shadows should obscure the sight
Of one, whose birth was in a land of light,
Shall answer, Hope, sweet Hope has set me free,
And made all pleasures else mere dross to me.

These, amidst scenes as waste as if denied
The common care that waits on all beside,
Wild as if Nature there, void of all good,
Play'd only gambols in a frantic mood
(Yet charge not heavenly skill with having plann'd
A plaything world, unworthy of his hand);
Can see his love, though secret evil lurks
In all we touch, stamp'd plainly on his works;
Deem life a blessing with its numerous woes,
Nor spurn away a gift a God bestows.
Hard task indeed o'er arctic seas to roam!
Is hope exotic? grows it not at home?
Yes, but an object, bright as orient morn,
May press the eye too closely to be borne;
A distant virtue we can all confess,
It hurts our pride, and moves our envy, less.

Leuconomus (beneath well sounding Greek
I slur a name a poet must not speak)
Stood pilloried on infamy's high stage,
And bore the pelting scorn of half an age;
The very butt of slander, and the blot
For every dart that malice ever shot.
The man that mention'd *him* at once dismiss'd
All mercy from his lips, and sneer'd and hiss'd;
His crimes were such as Sodom never knew,
And Perjury stood up to swear all true;
His aim was mischief, and his zeal pretence,
His speech rebellion against common sense;
A knave, when tried on honesty's plain rule,
And when by that of reason, a mere fool;
The world's best comfort was, his doom was pass'd;
Die when he might, he must be damn'd at last.

Now, Truth, perform thine office; waft aside
The curtain drawn by Prejudice and Pride,
Reveal (the man is dead) to wondering eyes
This more than monster in his proper guise.

He loved the world that hated him: the tear
That dropp'd upon his Bible was sincere:
Assail'd by scandal and the tongue of strife,
His only answer was a blameless life;
And he that forged, and he that threw the dart,
Had each a brother's interest in his heart.
Paul's love of Christ, and steadiness unbribed,
Weré copied close in him, and well transcribed.
He follow'd Paul; his zeal a kindred flame,
His apostolic charity the same.
Like him, cross'd cheerfully tempestuous seas,
Forsaking country, kindred, friends, and ease;
Like him, he labour'd, and like him content
To bear it, suffer'd shame where'er he went.

Blush, Calumny; and write upon his tomb;
If honest Eulogy can spare thee room,
Thy deep repentance of thy thousand lies,
Which, aim'd at him, have pierced the' offended
 skies;

And say, Blot out my sin, confess'd, deplored,
Against thine image in thy saint, O Lord!
No blinder bigot, I maintain it still,
Than he who must have pleasure, come what will;
He laughs, whatever weapon Truth may draw,
And deems her sharp artillery mere straw.
Scripture indeed is plain; but God and he
On Scripture ground are sure to disagree;
Some wiser rule must teach him how to live
Than this his Maker has seen fit to give;
Supple and flexible as Indian cane,
To take the bend his appetites ordain;
Contrived to suit frail nature's crazy case,
And reconcile his lusts with saving grace.
By this, with nice precision of design,
He draws upon life's map a zigzag line,
That shows how far 'tis safe to follow sin,
And where his danger and God's wrath begin.
By this he forms, as pleased he sports along,
His well poised estimate of right and wrong;
And finds the modish manners of the day,
Though loose, as harmless as an infant's play.

Build by whatever plan caprice decrees,
With what materials, on what ground you please;
Your hope shall stand unblamed, perhaps admired,
If not that hope the Scripture has required,
The strange conceits, vain projects, and wild
With which hypocrisy for ever teems [dreams,
(Though other follies strike the public eye,
And raise a laugh), pass unmolested by;

But if, unblamable in word or thought,
A *man* arise, a man whom God has taught,
With all Elijah's dignity of tone,
And all the love of the beloved John,
To storm the citadels they build in air,
And smite the 'untemper'd wall; 'tis death to spare.
To sweep away all refuges of lies
And place, instead of quirks themselves devise,
LAMA SABACTHANI before their eyes;
To prove that without Christ all gain is loss,
All hope despair, that stands not on his cross;
Except the few his God may have impress'd,
A tenfold frenzy seizes all the rest.

Throughout mankind, the Christian kind at least,
There dwells a consciousness in every breast,
That folly ends where genuine hope begins,
And he that finds his Heaven must lose his sins.
Nature opposes with her utmost force
This riving stroke, this ultimate divorce;
And, while religion seems to be her view,
Hates with a deep sincerity *the true*:
For this, of all that ever influenced man,
Since Abel worship'd, or the world began,
This only spares no lust, admits no plea,
But makes him, if at all, completely free:
Sounds forth the signal, as she mounts her car,
Of an eternal, universal war;
Rejects all treaty, penetrates all wiles, [smiles;
Scorns with the same indifference frowns and
Drives through the realms of Sin, where Riot reels,
And grinds his crown beneath her burning wheels!
Hence all that is in man, pride, passion, art,
Powers of the mind, and feelings of the heart,
Insensible of Truth's almighty charms,
Starts at her first approach, and sounds to arms!

While Bigotry, with well dissembled fears,
His eyes shut fast, his fingers in his ears,
Mighty to parry and push by God's word
With senseless noise, his argument the sword,
Pretends a zeal for godliness and grace,
And spits abhorrence in the Christian's face.

Parent of Hope, immortal Truth ! make known
Thy deathless wreaths, and triumphs all thine own :
The silent progress of thy power is such,
Thy means so feeble, and despised so much,
That few believe the wonders thou hast wrought,
And none can teach them but whom thou hast
taught.

O, see me sworn to serve thee, and command
A painter's skill into a poet's hand,
That, while I trembling trace a work divine,
Fancy may stand aloof from the design,
And light, and shade, and every stroke be thine.

If ever thou hast felt another's pain,
If ever when he sigh'd, hast sigh'd again,
If ever on thy eyelid stood the tear
That pity had engender'd, drop one here.
This man was happy—had the world's good word,
And with it every joy it can afford;
Friendship and love seem'd tenderly at strife,
Which most should sweeten his untroubled life;
Politely learn'd, and of a gentle race,
Good breeding and good sense gave all a grace,
And whether at the toilet of the fair
He laugh'd and trifled, made him welcome there,
Or if in masculine debate he shared,
Ensured him mute attention and regard.
Alas how changed ! Expressive of his mind,
His eyes are sunk, arms folded, head reclined;

Those awful syllables, Hell, death, and sin,
Though whisper'd plainly, tell what works within;
That Conscience there performs her proper part,
And writes a doomsday sentence on his heart;
Forsaking, and forsaken of all friends,
He now perceives where earthly pleasure ends;
Hard task! for one who lately knew no care,
And harder still as learn'd beneath despair;
His hours no longer pass unmark'd away,
A dark importance saddens every day;
He hears the notice of the clock, perplex'd,
And cries, perhaps eternity strikes next;
Sweet music is no longer music here,
And laughter sounds like madness in his ear:
His grief the world of all her power disarms,
Wine has no taste, and beauty has no charms:
God's holy word, once trivial in his view,
Now by the voice of his experience true,
Seems as it is, the fountain whence alone
Must spring that hope he pants to make his own.

Now let the bright reverse be known abroad;
Say man's a worm, and power belongs to God.
As when a felon, whom his country's laws
Have justly doom'd for some atrocious cause,
Expects in darkness and heart-chilling fears,
The shameful close of all his mispent years;
If chance, on heavy pinions slowly borne,
A tempest usher in the dreaded morn,
Upon his dungeon walls the lightning play,
The thunder seems to summon him away,
The warder at the door his key applies,
Shoots back the bolt, and all his courage dies:
If then, just then, all thoughts of mercy lost,
When hope, long lingering, at last yields the ghost

The sound of pardon pierce his startled ear,
He drops at once his fetters and his fear;
A transport glows in all he looks and speaks,
And the first thankful tears bedew his cheeks;
Joy, far superior joy, that much outweighs
The comfort of a few poor added days,
Invades, possesses, and o'erwhelms the soul
Of him whom hope has with a touch made whole.
'Tis Heaven, all Heaven descending on the wings
Of the glad legions of the King of kings;
'Tis more—'tis God diffused through every part,
'Tis God himself triumphant in his heart.
O, welcome now the sun's once hated light,
His noonday beams were never half so bright.
Not kindred minds alone are call'd to' employ
Their hours, their days, in listening to his joy;
Unconscious nature, all that he surveys,
Rocks, groves, and streams must join him in
his praise.

These are thy glorious works, eternal Truth,
The scoff of wither'd age and beardless youth;
These move the censure and illiberal grin
Of fools that hate thee and delight in sin:
But these shall last when night has quench'd the
And Heaven is all departed as a scroll. [pole,
And when, as Justice has long since decreed,
This earth shall blaze, and a new world succeed,
Then these thy glorious works, and they who share
That hope, which can alone exclude despair,
Shall live exempt from weakness and decay,
The brightest wonders of an endless day.

Happy the bard (if that fair name belong
To him that blends no fable with his song),

Whose lines uniting, by an honest art,
 The faithful monitor's and poet's part,
 Seek to delight, that they may mend mankind,
 And, while they captivate, inform the mind:
 Still happier, if he till a thankful soil,
 And fruit reward his honourable toil;
 But happier far who comfort those that wait
 To hear plain truth at Judah's hallow'd gate:
 Their language simple, as their manners meek,
 No shining ornaments have they to seek;
 Nor labour they, nor time nor talents waste,
 In sorting flowers to suit a fickle taste;
 But while they speak, the wisdom of the skies,
 Which art can only darken and disguise,
 The' abundant harvest, recompense divine,
 Repays their work—the gleanings only mine.

CHARITY.

Quo nihil majus meliusve terris
 Fata donavère, bonique divi :
 Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum
 Tempora priscum. HOR. Lib. 4. Od. 2.

FAIREST and foremost of the train that wait
 On man's most dignified and happiest state,
 Whether we name thee Charity or Love,
 Chief grace below, and all in all above,
 Prosper (I press thee with a powerful plea)
 A task I venture on, impell'd by thee:

O never seen but in thy bless'd effects,
Or felt but in the soul that Heaven selects:
Who seeks to praise thee, and to make thee known
To other hearts, must have thee in his own.
Come, prompt me with benevolent desires,
Teach me to kindle at thy gentle fires,
And though disgraced and slighted, to redeem
A poet's name, by making thee the theme.

God, working ever on a social plan,
By various ties attaches man to man:
He made at first, though free and unconfined,
One man the common father of the kind;
That every tribe, though placed as he sees best,
Where seas or deserts part them from the rest,
Differing in language, manners, or in face,
Might feel themselves allied to all the race.
When Cook—lamented, and with tears as just
As ever mingled with heroic dust,
Steer'd Britain's oak into a world unknown,
And in his country's glory sought his own,
Wherever he found man, to nature true,
The rights of man were sacred in his view;
He sooth'd with gifts and greeted with a smile
The simple native of the new found isle;
He spurn'd the wretch that slighted or withstood
The tender argument of kindred blood,
Nor would endure that any should control
His freeborn brethren of the southern pole.

But though some nobler minds a law respect,
That none shall with impunity neglect,
In baser souls unnumber'd evils meet,
To thwart its influence, and its end defeat.
While Cook is loved for savage lives he saved,
See Cortez odious for a world enslaved!

Where wast thou then, sweet Charity? where then,
Thou tutelary friend of helpless men?
Wast thou in monkish cells and nunneries found,
Or building hospitals on English ground?
No.—Mammon makes the world his legatee
Through fear, not love; and Heaven abhors the fee.
Wherever found (and all men need thy care),
Nor age nor infancy could find thee there.
The hand that slew till it could slay no more
Was glued to the swordhilt with Indian gore.
Their prince, as justly seated on his throne
As vain imperial Philip on his own,
Triek'd out of all his royalty by art,
That stripp'd him bare and broke his honest heart,
Died by the sentence of a shaven priest,
For scorning what they taught him to detest.
How dark the veil that intercepts the blaze
Of Heaven's mysterious purposes and ways;
God stood not, though he seem'd to stand, aloof;
And at this hour the conqueror feels the proof:
The wreath he won drew down an instant curse,
The fretting plague is in the public purse,
The canker'd spoil corrodes the pining state,
Starved by that indolence their mines create.
Oh, could their ancient Incas rise again,
How would they take up Israel's taunting strain!
Art thou too fallen, Iberia! Do we see
The robber and the murderer weak as we?
Thou, that hast wasted earth, and dared despise
Alike the wrath and mercy of the skies,
Thy pomp is in the grave, thy glory laid
Low in the pits thine avarice has made.
We come with joy from our eternal rest,
To see the oppressor in his turn oppress'd.

Art thou the god, the thunder of whose hand
Roll'd over all our desolated land,
Shook principalities and kingdoms down,
And made the mountains tremble at his frown?
The sword shall light upon thy boasted powers,
And waste them, as thy sword has wasted ours.
'Tis thus Omnipotence his law fulfils,
And Vengeance executes what Justice wills.

Again—the band of commerce was design'd
To' associate all the branches of mankind;
And if a boundless plenty be the robe,
Trade is the golden girdle of the globe.
Wise to promote whatever end he means,
God opens fruitful nature's various scenes:
Each climate needs what other climes produce,
And offers something to the general use;
No land but listens to the common call,
And in return receives supply from all.
This genial intercourse and mutual aid
Cheers what were else a universal shade,
Calls Nature from her ivy-mantled den,
And softens human rock-work into men.
Ingenious Art, with her expressive face,
Steps forth to fashion and refine the race;
Not only fills Necessity's demand,
But overcharges her capacious hand:
Capricious taste itself can crave no more
Than she supplies from her abounding store:
She strikes out all that luxury can ask,
And gains new vigour at her endless task.
Hers is the spacious arch, the shapely spire,
The painter's pencil, and the poet's lyre;
From her the canvass borrows light and shade,
And verse, more lasting, hues that never fade.

She guides the finger o'er the dancing keys,
Gives difficulty all the grace of ease,
And pours a torrent of sweet notes around,
Fast as the thirsting ear can drink the sound.

These are the gifts of Art, and Art thrives most
Where Commerce has enrich'd the busy coast;
He catches all improvements in his flight,
Spreads foreign wonders in his country's sight.
Imports what others have invented well,
And stirs his own to match them, or excel.
'Tis thus reciprocating, each with each,
Alternately the nations learn and teach;
While Providence enjoins to every soul
A union with the vast terraqueous whole.

Heaven speed the canvass, gallantly unfurl'd
To furnish and accommodate a world,
To give the pole the produce of the sun,
And knit the' unsocial climates into one.—
Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave
Impel the fleet, whose errand is to save,
To succour wasted regions, and replace
The smile of Opulence in Sorrow's face—
Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,
Impede the bark that ploughs the deep serene.
Charged with a freight transcending in its worth
The gems of India, Nature's rarest birth,
That flies, like Gabriel on his Lord's commands,
A herald of God's love to pagan lands.
But, ah! what wish can prosper, or what prayer,
For merchants rich in cargoes of despair,
Who drive a loathsome traffic, gauge and span,
And buy the muscles and the bones of man?
The tender ties of father, husband, friend,
All bonds of nature in that moment end;

And each endures, while yet he draws his breath,
A stroke as fatal as the scythe of death.
The sable warrior, frantic with regret
Of her he loves and never can forget,
Loses in tears the far receding shore,
But not the thought that they must meet no more;
Deprived of her and freedom at a blow,
What has he left that he can yet forego?
Yes, to deep sadness sullenly resign'd,
He feels his body's bondage in his mind;
Puts off his generous nature; and, to suit
His manners with his fate, puts on the brute.

O most degrading of all ills that wait
On man, a mourner in his best estate!
All other sorrows virtue may endure,
And find submission more than half a cure;
Grief is itself a medicine, and bestow'd
To' improve the fortitude that bears the load,
To teach the wanderer, as his woes increase,
The path of Wisdom, all whose paths are peace;
But slavery!—Virtue dreads it as her grave:
Patience itself is meanness in a slave:
Or if the will and sovereignty of God
Bid suffer it awhile, and kiss the rod,
Wait for the dawning of a brighter day,
And snap the chain the moment when you may.
Nature imprints upon whate'er we see,
That has a heart and life in it, Be free;
The beasts are charter'd—neither age nor force
Can quell the love of freedom in a horse:
He breaks the cord that held him at the rack;
And, conscious of an unincumber'd back,
Snuffs up the morning air, forgets the rein,
Loose fly his forelock and his ample mane;

Responsive to the distant neigh he neighs;
Nor stops, till, overleaping all delays,
He finds the pasture where his fellows graze.

Canst thou, and honour'd with a Christian name,
Buy what is woman born, and feel no shame?
Trade in the blood of innocence, and plead
Expedience as a warrant for the deed?
So may the wolf, whom famine has made bold
To quit the forest and invade the fold:
So may the ruffian, who with ghostly glide,
Dagger in hand, steals close to your bedside;
Not he, but his emergence forced the door,
He found it inconvenient to be poor.
Has God then given its sweetness to the cane,
Unless his laws be trampled on—in vain?
Built a brave world, which cannot yet subsist,
Unless his right to rule it be dismiss'd?
Impudent blasphemy! So Folly pleads,
And, Avarice being judge, with ease succeeds.

But grant the plea, and let it stand for just,
That man make man his prey, because he *must*;
Still there is room for pity to abate,
And sooth the sorrows of so sad a state.
A Briton knows, or if he knows it not,
The Scripture placed within his reach, he ought,
That souls have no discriminating hue,
Alike important in their Maker's view;
That none are free from blemish since the fall,
And love divine has paid one price for all.
The wretch, that works and weeps without relief,
Has one that notices his silent grief,
He, from whose hands alone all power proceeds,
Ranks its abuse among the foulest deeds,
Considers *all* injustice with a frown;
But *marks* the man that treads his fellow down.

Begone, the whip and bell in that hard hand
Are hateful ensigns of usurp'd command.
Not Mexico could purchase kings a claim
To scourge him, weariness his only blame.
Remember, Heaven has an avenging rod;
To smite the poor is treason against God.

Trouble is grudgingly and hardly brook'd,
While life's sublimest joys are overlook'd:
We wander o'er a sunburnt thirsty soil,
Murmuring and weary of our daily toil,
Forget to' enjoy the palm-tree's offer'd shade,
Or taste the fountain in the neighbouring glade:
Else who would lose, that had the power to' improve,

The' occasion of transmuting fear to love?
O, 'tis a godlike privilege to save,
And he that scorns it is himself a slave.
Inform his mind; one flash of heavenly day,
Would heal his heart, and melt his chains away.
"Beauty for ashes" is a gift indeed,
And slaves, by truth enlarged, are doubly freed.
Then would he say, submissive at thy feet,
While gratitude and love made service sweet,
My dear deliverer out of hopeless night,
Whose bounty bought me but to give me light,
I was a bondman on my native plain,
Sin forged, and Ignorance made fast the chain;
Thy lips have shed instruction as the dew,
Taught me what path to shun, and what pursue;
Farewell my former joys! I sigh no more
For Africa's once loved, benighted shore;
Serving a benefactor I am free,
At my best home, if not exiled from thee.

Some men make gain a fountain, whence pro-
A stream of liberal and heroic deeds; [ceeds

The swell of pity, not to be confined
Within the scanty limits of the mind,
Disdains the bank, and throws the golden sands,
A rich deposit, on the bordering lands;
These have an ear for his paternal call,
Who makes some rich for the supply of all;
God's gift with pleasure in his praise employ,
And Thornton is familiar with the joy.

O, could I worship aught beneath the skies,
That earth has seen, or fancy can devise,
Thine altar, sacred Liberty, should stand,
Built by no mercenary vulgar hand,
With fragrant turf, and flowers as wild and fair
As ever dress'd a bank or scented summer air.
Duly, as ever on the mountain's height
The peep of Morning shed a dawning light;
Again, when Evening in her sober vest
Drew the gray curtain of the fading west,
My soul should yield thee willing thanks and
praise,

For the chief blessings of my fairest days:
But that were sacrilege—praise is not thine,
But his who gave thee, and preserves thee mine:
Else I would say, and as I spake bid fly
A captive bird into the boundless sky,
This triple realm adores thee—thou art come
From Sparta hither, and art here at home.
We feel thy force still active, at this hour
Enjoy immunity from priestly power,
While Conscience, happier than in ancient years,
Owns no superior but the God she fears.
Propitious spirit! yet expunge a wrong
Thy rights have suffer'd, and our land, too long.
Teach mercy to ten thousand hearts that share
The fears and hopes of a commercial care.

Prisons expect the wicked, and were built
To bind the lawless, and to punish guilt;
But shipwreck, earthquake, battle, fire, and flood
Are mighty mischiefs, not to be withstood;
And honest Merit stands on slippery ground,
Where covert guile and artifice abound.
Let just Restraint, for public peace design'd,
Chain up the wolves and tigers of mankind;
The foe of virtue has no claim to thee,
But let insolvent innocence go free.

Patron of else the most despised of men,
Accept the tribute of a stranger's pen;
Verse, like the laurel, its immortal meed,
Should be the guerdon of a noble deed;
I may alarm thee, but I fear the shame
(Charity chosen as my theme and aim)
I must incur, forgetting Howard's name.
Bless'd with all wealth can give thee, to resign
Joys doubly sweet to feelings quick as thine,
To quit the bliss thy rural scenes bestow,
To seek a nobler amid scenes of woe,
To traverse seas, range kingdoms, and bring home,
Not the proud monuments of Greece or Rome,
But knowledge such as only dungeons teach,
And only sympathy like thine could reach;
That grief, sequester'd from the public stage,
Might smooth her feathers, and enjoy her cage;
Speaks a divine ambition, and a zeal
The boldest patriot might be proud to feel.
O, that the voice of clamour and debate,
That pleads for peace till it disturbs the state,
Were hush'd in favour of thy generous plea,
The poor thy clients, and Heaven's smile thy fee!
Philosophy, that does not dream or stray,
Walks arm in arm with Nature all his way;

Compasses earth, dives into it, ascends
Whatever steep Inquiry recommends,
Sees planetary wonders smoothly roll
Round other systems under her control,
Drinks wisdom at the milky stream of light,
That cheers the silent journey of the night,
And brings at his return a bosom charged
With rich instruction, and a soul enlarged.
The treasured sweets of the capacious plan,
That Heavenspreads wide before the view of man,
All prompt his pleased pursuit, and to pursue
Still prompt him, with a pleasure always new;
He too has a connecting power, and draws
Man to the centre of the common cause,
Aiding a dubious and deficient sight
With a new medium and a purer light.
All truth is precious, if not all divine;
And what dilates the powers must needs refine.
He reads the skies, and, watching every change,
Provides the faculties an ampler range;
And wins mankind, as his attempts prevail,
A prouder station on the general scale.
But Reason still, unless divinely taught,
Whate'er she learns, learns nothing as she ought;
The lamp of revelation only shows,
What human wisdom cannot but oppose,
That man, in nature's richest mantle clad,
And graced with all philosophy can add,
Though fair without, and luminous within,
Is still the progeny and heir of sin.
Thus taught, down falls the plumage of his pride;
He feels his need of an unerring guide,
And knows that falling he shall rise no more,
Unless the power that bade him stand restore.

This is indeed philosophy; this known
 Makes wisdom worthy of the name his own;
 And without this, whatever he discuss,
 Whether the space between the stars and us,
 Whether he measure earth, compute the sea,
 Weigh sunbeams, carve a fly, or split a flea;
 The solemn trifter with his boasted skill
 Toils much, and is a solemn trifter still:
 Blind was he born, and his misguided eyes
 Grown dim in trifling studies, blind he dies.
 Self-knowledge truly learn'd of course implies
 The rich possession of a nobler prize;
 For self to self, and God to man reveal'd
 (Two themes to Nature's eye for ever seal'd),
 Are taught by rays that fly with equal pace
 From the same centre of enlightening grace.
 Here stay thy foot; how copious and how clear
 The' o'erflowing well of Charity springs here!
 Hark! 'tis the music of a thousand rills,
 Some through the groves, some down the sloping
 Winding a secret or an open course, [hills,
 And all supplied from an eternal source.
 The ties of Nature do but feebly bind,
 And Commerce partially reclaims mankind;
 Philosophy, without his heavenly guide,
 May blow up selfconceit, and nourish pride,
 But, while his province is the reasoning part,
 Has still a veil of midnight on his heart:
 'Tis truth divine, exhibited on earth,
 Gives Charity her being and her birth.

Suppose (when thought is warm and fancy flows,
 What will not argument sometimes suppose?)
 An isle possess'd by creatures of our kind,
 Endued with reason, yet by nature blind.

Let Supposition lend her aid once more,
And land some grave optician on the shore:
He claps his lens, if haply they may see,
Close to the part where vision ought to be;
But finds, that though his tubes assist the sight,
They cannot give it, or make darkness light.
He reads wise lectures, and describes aloud,
A sense they know not, to the wondering crowd;
He talks of light, and the prismatic hues,
As men of depth in erudition use;
But all he gains for his harangue is—Well——
What monstrous lies some travellers will tell!

The soul, whose sight all quickening grace
renews,
Takes the resemblance of the good she views,
As diamonds, stripp'd of their opaque disguise,
Reflect the noonday glory of the skies.
She speaks of him, her author, guardian, friend,
Whose love knew no beginning, knows no end,
In language warm as all that love inspires,
And, in the glow of her intense desires,
Pants to communicate her noble fires.
She sees a world stark blind to what employs
Her eager thought, and feeds her flowing joys:
Though Wisdom hail them, heedless of her call,
Flies to save some, and feels a pang for all;
Herself as weak as her support is strong,
She feels that frailty she denied so long;
And, from a knowledge of her own disease,
Learns to compassionate the sick she sees.
Here see, acquitted of all vain pretence,
The reign of genuine Charity commence.
Though scorn repay her sympathetic tears,
She still is kind, and still she perseveres;

The truth she loves a sightless world blaspheme,
'Tis childish dotage, a delirious dream.
The danger they discern not they deny;
Laugh at their only remedy, and die.
But still a soul thus touch'd can never cease,
Whoever threatens war, to speak of peace.
Pure in her aim, and in her temper mild,
Her wisdom seems the weakness of a child:
She makes excuses where she might condemn,
Reviled by those that hate her, prays for them;
Suspicion lurks not in her artless breast,
The worst suggested, she believes the best;
Not soon provoked, however stung and teased,
And, if perhaps made angry, soon appeased;
She rather waves than will dispute her right,
And injured makes forgiveness her delight.

Such was the portrait an apostle drew,
The bright original was one he knew;
Heaven held his hand, the likeness must be true.

When one that holds communion with the skies,
Has fill'd his urn where these pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings:
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied.
So when a ship, well freighted with the stores
The sun matures on India's spicy shores,
Has dropp'd her anchor, and her canvass furl'd,
In some safe haven of our western world,
'Twere vain inquiry to what port she went,
The gale informs us, laden with the scent.

Some seek, when queasy conscience has its
qualms,
To lull the painful malady with alms:

But charity not feign'd intends alone
Another's good—theirs centres in their own;
And too shortlived to reach the realms of peace,
Must cease for ever when the poor shall cease,
Flavia, most tender of her own good name,
Is rather careless of her sister's fame:
Her superfluity the poor supplies,
But if she touch a character, it dies.
The seeming virtue weigh'd against the vice,
She deems all safe, for she has paid the price:
No charity but alms aught values she,
Except in porcelain on her mantle tree.
How many deeds, with which the world has rung,
From Pride, in league with Ignorance, have sprung!
But God o'errules all human follies still,
And bends the tough materials to his will.
A conflagration, or a wintry flood
Has left some hundreds without home or food:
Extravagance and Avarice shall subscribe,
While fame and selfcomplacence are the bribe.
The brief proclaim'd, it visits every pew,
But first the squire's, a compliment but due;
With slow deliberation he unties
His glittering purse, that envy of all eyes,
And, while the clerk just puzzles out the psalm,
Slides guinea behind guinea in his palm;
Till finding, what he might have found before,
A smaller piece amidst the precious store,
Pinch'd close between his finger and his thumb,
He half exhibits, and then drops the sum.
Gold to be sure!—Throughout the town 'tis told,
How the good squire gives never less than gold.
From motives such as his, though not the best,
Springs in due time supply for the distress'd;

Not less effectual than what love bestows,
Except that office clips it as it goes.

But lest I seem to sin against a friend,
And wound the grace I mean to recommend
(Though vice derided with a just design
Implies no trespass against love divine),
Once more I would adopt the graver style,
A teacher should be sparing of his smile.
Unless a love of virtue light the flame,
Satire is, more than those he brands, to blame;
He hides behind a magisterial air
His own offences, and strips others bare;
Affects indeed a most humane concern,
That men, if gently tutor'd, will not learn:
That mulish folly, not to be reclaim'd
By softer methods, must be made ashamed:
But (I might instance in St. Patrick's dean)
Too often rails to gratify his spleen.
Most satirists are indeed a public scourge;
Their mildest physic is a farrier's purge;
Their acrid temper turns, as soon as stirr'd,
The milk of their good purpose all to curd.
Their zeal begotten, as their works rehearse,
By lean despair upon an empty purse,
The wild assassins start into the street,
Prepared to poniard whomsoe'er they meet.
No skill in swordmanship, however just,
Can be secure against a madman's thrust;
And even Virtue, so unfairly match'd,
Although immortal, may be prick'd or scratch'd.
When Scandal has new-minted an old lie,
Or tax'd invention for a fresh supply,
'Tis call'd a satire, and the world appears
Gathering around it with erected ears:

A thousand names are toss'd into the crowd;
Some whisper'd softly, and some twang'd aloud;
Just as the sapience of an author's brain
Suggest it safe or dangerous to be plain.
Strange! how the frequent interjected dash
Quickens a market and helps off the trash;
The' important letters that include the rest,
Serve as a key to those that are suppress'd;
Conjecture gripes the victims in his paw,
The world is charm'd, and Scrib escapes the law.
So when the cold damp shades of night prevail,
Worms may be caught by either head or tail;
Forcibly drawn from many a close recess,
They meet with little pity, no redress;
Plunged in the stream they lodge upon the mud,
Food for the famish'd rovers of the flood.

All zeal for a reform that gives offence
To peace and charity is mere pretence;
A bold remark, but which, if well applied,
Would humble many a towering poet's pride.
Perhaps the man was in a sportive fit,
And had no other playplace for his wit;
Perhaps, enchanted with the love of fame,
He sought the jewel in his neighbour's shame;
Perhaps—whatever end he might pursue,
The cause of virtue could not be his view.
At every stroke wit flashes in our eyes;
The turns are quick, the polish'd points surprise,
But shine with cruel and tremendous charms,
That, while they please, possess us with alarms:
So have I seen (and hasten'd to the sight
On all the wings of holiday delight),
Where stands that monument of ancient power,
Named with emphatic dignity, the Tower,

Guns, halberts, swords, and pistols, great and small,
In starry forms disposed upon the wall;
We wonder, as we gazing stand below,
That brass and steel should make so fine a show;
But though we praise the' exact designer's skill,
Account them implements of mischief still.

No works shall find acceptance in that day,
When all disguises shall be rent away,
That square not truly with the Scripture plan,
Nor spring from love to God, or love to man,
As he ordains things sordid in their birth,
To be resolved into their parent earth;
And though the soul shall seek superior orbs,
Whate'er this world produces it absorbs;
So self starts nothing, but what tends apace
Home to the goal, where it began the race.
Such as our motive is, our aim must be;
If this be servile, that can ne'er be free:
If self employ us, whatsoe'er is wrought,
We glorify that self, not him we ought;
Such virtues had need prove their own reward,
The judge of all men owes them no regard.
True charity, a plant divinely nursed,
Fed by the love from which it rose at first,
Thrives against hope, and in the rudest scene
Storms but enliven its unfading green;
Exuberant is the shadow it supplies,
Its fruits on earth, its growth above the skies.
To look at him, who form'd us and redeem'd,
So glorious now, though once so disesteem'd,
To see a God stretch forth his human hand,
To' uphold the boundless scenes of his command;
To recollect, that, in a form like ours,
He bruised beneath his feet the' infernal powers,

Captivity led captive, rose to claim
The wreath he won so dearly in our name:
That throned above all height he condescends
To call the few that trust in him his friends;
That, in the Heaven of heavens, that space he
deems

Too scanty for the' exertion of his beams,
And shines, as if impatient to bestow
Life and a kingdom upon worms below;
That sight imparts a never dying flame,
Though feeble in degree, in kind the same.
Like him the soul thus kindled from above
Spreads wide her arms of universal love;
And still enlarged as she receives the grace,
Includes creation in her close embrace.
Behold a Christian!—and without the fires
The founder of that name alone inspires,
Though all accomplishment, all knowledge meet,
To make the shining prodigy complete,
Whoever boasts that name—behold a cheat!
Were love, in these the world's last dotting years,
As frequent as the want of it appears,
The churches warm'd, they would no longer hold
Such frozen figures, stiff as they are cold;
Relenting forms would lose their power, or cease,
And e'en the dipp'd and sprinkled live in peace:
Each heart would quit its prison in the breast,
And flow in free communion with the rest.
The statesman, skill'd in projects dark and deep,
Might burn his useless Machiavel, and sleep;
His budget often fill'd, yet always poor,
Might swing at ease behind his study door,
No longer prey upon our annual rents,
Or scare the nation with its big contents:

Disbanded legions freely might depart,
 And slaying man would cease to be an art.
 No learned disputants would take the field,
 Sure not to conquer, and sure not to yield;
 Both sides deceived, if rightly understood,
 Pelting each other for the public good.
 Did charity prevail, the press would prove
 A vehicle of virtue, truth, and love;
 And I might spare myself the pains to show
 What few can learn, and all suppose they know.
 Thus have I sought to grace a serious lay
 With many a wild indeed but flowery spray,
 In hopes to gain, what else I must have lost,
 The' attention pleasure has so much engross'd,
 But if unhappily deceived I dream,
 And prove too weak for so divine a theme,
 Let Charity forgive me a mistake
 That zeal, not vanity, has chanced to make,
 And spare the poet for his subject's sake.

CONVERSATION.

Nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus auri,
 Nec percussa juvant flucta tam littora, nec quæ
 Saxosæ inter decurrunt flumina valles.

VIRGIL, *Ecl.* 5.

THOUGH Nature weigh our talents, and dispense
 To every man his modicum of sense,
 And Conversation in its better part
 May be esteem'd a gift, and not an art,

Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,
On culture, and the sowing of the soil.
Words learn'd by rote a parrot may rehearse,
But talking is not always to converse;
Not more distinct from harmony divine,
The constant creaking of a country sign.
As Alphabets in ivory employ,
Hour after hour, the yet unletter'd boy,
Sorting and puzzling with a deal of glee
Those seeds of science called his A B C;
So language in the mouths of the adult,
Witness its insignificant result,
Too often proves an implement of play,
A toy to sport with, and pass time away.
Collect at evening what the day brought forth,
Compress the sum into its solid worth,
And if it weigh the' importance of a fly,
The scales are false, or algebra a lie.
Sacred interpreter of human thought,
How few respect or use thee as they ought!
But all shall give account of every wrong,
Who dare dishonour or defile the tongue;
Who prostitute it in the cause of vice,
Or sell their glory at the market price;
Who vote for hire, or point it with lampoon,
The dear-bought placeman, and the cheap buffoon.

There is a prurience in the speech of some,
Wrath stays him, or else God would strike them
dumb:

His wise forbearance has their end in view,
They fill their measure, and receive their due.
The heathen lawgivers of ancient days,
Names almost worthy of a Christian's praise,
Would drive them forth from the resort of men,
And shut up every satyr in his den.

O, come not ye near innocence and truth,
Ye worms that eat into the bud of youth!
Infectious as impure, your blighting power
Taints in its rudiments the promised flower;
Its odour perish'd and its charming hue,
Thenceforth 'tis hateful, for it smells of you.
Not e'en the vigorous and headlong rage
Of adolescence, or a firmer age,
Affords a plea allowable or just
For making speech the pamperer of lust;
But when the breath of age commits the fault,
'Tis nauseous as the vapour of a vault.
So wither'd stumps disgrace the silvan scene,
No longer fruitful, and no longer green;
The sapless wood, divested of the bark,
Grows fungous, and takes fire at every spark.
Oaths terminate, as Paul observes, all strife—
Some men have surely then a peaceful life;
Whatever subject occupy discourse,
The feats of Vestris or the naval force,
Asseveration blustering in your face
Makes contradiction such a hopeless case:
In every tale they tell, or false or true,
Well known, or such as no man ever knew,
They fix attention, heedless of your pain,
With oaths like rivets forced into the brain;
And e'en when sober truth prevails throughout,
They swear it, till affirmance breeds a doubt.
A Persian, humble servant of the sun,
Who though devout, yet bigotry had none,
Hearing a lawyer, grave in his address,
With adjurations every word impress,
Supposed the man a bishop, or at least,
God's name so much upon his lips, a priest;

Bow'd at the close with all his graceful airs,
And begg'd an interest in his frequent prayers.

Go, quit the rank to which ye stood preferr'd,
Henceforth associate in one common herd;
Religion, virtue, reason, common sense
Pronounce your human form a false pretence;
A mere disguise, in which a devil lurks,
Who yet betrays his secret by his works. [are,
Ye powers who rule the tongue, if such there
And make colloquial happiness your care,
Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate,
A duel in the form of a debate.

The clash of arguments and jar of words,
Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,
Decide no question with their tedious length,
For opposition gives opinion strength,
Divert the champions prodigal of breath,
And put the peaceably disposed to death.
O, thwart me not, sir Soph, at every turn,
Nor carp at every flaw you may discern;
Though syllogisms hang not on my tongue,
I am not surely always in the wrong;
'Tis hard if all is false that I advance,
A fool must now and then be right by chance.
Not that all freedom of dissent I blame;
No—there I grant the privilege I claim.
A disputable point is no man's ground;
Rove where you please, 'tis common all around.
Discourse may want an animated—No,
To brush the surface, and to make it flow;
But still remember, if you mean to please,
To press your point with modesty and ease.
The mark, at which my juster aim I take,
Is contradiction for its own dear sake.

Set your opinion at whatever pitch,
Knots and impediments make something hitch :
Adopt his own, 'tis equally in vain,
Your thread of argument is snapp'd again ;
The wrangler, rather than accord with you,
Will judge himself deceived, and prove it too.
Vociferated logic kills me quite,
A noisy man is always in the right—
I twirl my thumbs, fall back into my chair,
Fix on the wainscot a distressful stare,
And, when I hope his blunders are all out,
Reply discreetly—To be sure—no doubt!

Dubius is such a scrupulous good man—
Yes—you may catch him tripping, if you can.
He would not with a peremptory tone,
Assert the nose upon his face his own ;
With hesitation admirably slow,
He humbly hopes,—presumes it may be so.
His evidence, if he were call'd by law
To swear to some enormity he saw,
For want of prominence and just relief,
Would hang an honest man, and save a thief.
Through constant dread of giving truth offence,
He ties up all his hearers in suspense ;
Knows what he knows, as if he knew it not,
What he remembers seems to have forgot ;
His sole opinion, whatsoe'er befall,
Centring at last in having none at all.
Yet, though he tease and baulk your listening ear,
He makes one useful point exceeding clear ;
Howe'er ingenious on his darling theme
A sceptic in philosophy may seem,
Reduced to practice, his beloved rule
Would only prove him a consummate fool ;

Useless in him alike both brain and speech,
Fate having placed all truth above his reach,
His ambiguities his total sum,
He might as well be blind, and deaf and dumb.

Where men of judgment creep and feel their
The positive pronounce without dismay; [way,
Their want of light and intellect supplied
By sparks, absurdity strikes out of pride:
Without the means of knowing right from wrong,
They always are decisive, clear, and strong,
Where others toil with philosophic force,
Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course;
Flings at your head conviction in the lump,
And gains remote conclusions at a jump;
Their own defect, invisible to them,
Seen in another, they at once condemn;
And, though self-idolized in every case,
Hate their own likeness in a brother's face.
The cause is plain, and not to be denied,
The proud are always most provoked by pride.
Few competitions but engender spite;
And those the most, where neither has a right.

The point of honour has been deem'd of use,
To teach good manners, and to curb abuse;
Admit it true, the consequence is clear,
Our polish'd manners are a mask we wear,
And at the bottom barbarous still and rude,
We are restrain'd indeed, but not subdued.
The very remedy, however sure,
Springs from the mischief it intends to cure,
And savage in its principle appears,
Tried, as it should be, by the fruit it bears.
'Tis hard indeed if nothing will defend
Mankind from quarrels but their fatal end;

That now and then a hero must de cease,
That the surviving world may live in peace.
Perhaps at last close scrutiny may show
The practice dastardly, and mean, and low;
That men engage in it compell'd by force,
And fear, not courage, is its proper source.
The fear of tyrant custom, and the fear [sneer.
Lest fops should censure us, and fools should
At least to trample on our Maker's laws,
And hazard life for any or no cause;
To rush into a fix'd eternal state
Out of the very flames of rage and hate,
Or send another shivering to the bar
With all the guilt of such unnatural war,
Whatever Use may urge or Honour plead,
On Reason's verdict is a madman's deed.
Am I to set my life upon a throw,
Because a bear is rude and surly; No—
A moral, sensible, and well bred man
Will not affront me, and no other can.
Were I empower'd to regulate the lists,
They should encounter with well loaded fists:
A Trojan combat would be something new;
Let Dares beat Entellus black and blue;
Then each might show to his admiring friends,
In honourable bumps his rich amends,
And carry, in contusions of his skull,
A satisfactory receipt in full.
A story, in which native humour reigns,
Is often useful, always entertains.
A graver fact, enlisted on your side,
May furnish illustration, well applied;
But sedentary weavers of long tales
Give me the fidgets, and my patience fails.

'Tis the most asinine employ on earth,
To hear them tell of parentage and birth,
And echo conversations, dull and dry,
Embellish'd with—*He said, and so said I.*
At every interview their route the same,
The repetition makes attention lame:
We bustle up with unsuccessful speed,
And in the saddest part cry—*Droll indeed!*
The path of narrative with care pursue,
Still making probability your clue;
On all the vestiges of truth attend,
And let *them* guide you to a decent end.
Of all ambitions man may entertain,
The worst, that can invade a sickly brain,
Is that, which angles hourly for surprise,
And baits its hook with prodigies and lies.
Credulous infancy, or age as weak,
Are fittest auditors for such to seek,
Who to please others will themselves disgrace,
Yet please not, but affront you to your face,
A great retailer of this curious ware
Having unloaded and made many stare,
Can this be true?—an arch observer cries,
Yes (rather moved), I saw it with these eyes;
Sir! I believe it on that ground alone;
I could not, had I seen it with my own.

A tale should be judicious, clear, succinct;
The language plain, and incidents well link'd;
Tell not as new what every body knows,
And, new or old, still hasten to a close;
There, centring in a focus round and neat,
Let all your rays of information meet.
What neither yields us profit nor delight
Is like a nurse's lullaby at night;

Guy Earl of Warwick and fair Eleanore,
Or giant-killing Jack, would please me more.

The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,
Makes half a sentence at a time enough;
The dosing sages drop the drowsy strain,
Then pause, and puff—and speak, and pause
Such often, like the tube they so admire, [again.
Important triflers! have more smoke than fire.
Pernicious weed! whose scent the fair annoys,
Unfriendly to society's chief joys,
Thy worst effect is banishing for hours
The sex, whose presence civilizes ours:
Thou art indeed the drug a gardener wants,
To poison vermin that infest his plants;
But are we so to wit and beauty blind,
As to despise the glory of our kind,
And show the softest minds and fairest forms
As little mercy as he grubs and worms?
They dare not wait the riotous abuse,
Thy thirst-creating steams at length produce,
When wine has given indecent language birth,
And forced the floodgates of licentious mirth;
For seaborn Venus her attachment shows
Still to that element, from which she rose,
And with a quiet, which no fumes disturb,
Sips meek infusions of a milder herb.

The' emphatic speaker dearly loves to' oppose,
In contact inconvenient, nose to nose,
As if the gnomon on his neighbour's phiz,
Touch'd with the magnet, had attracted his.
His whisper'd theme, dilated and at large,
Proves after all a windgun's airy charge,
An extract of his diary—no more,
A tasteless journal of the day before.

He walk'd abroad, o'ertaken in the rain,
Call'd on a friend, drank tea, stepp'd home again,
Resumed his purpose, had a world of talk
With one he stumbled on, and lost his walk.
I interrupt him with a sudden bow,
Adieu, dear Sir! lest you should lose it now.

I cannot talk with civet in the room,
A fine puss gentleman that's all perfume;
The sight's enough—no need to smell a beau—
Who thrusts his nose into a rareeshow?
His odoriferous attempts to please
Perhaps might prosper with a swarm of bees;
But we that make no honey, though we sting,
Poets, are sometimes apt to maul the thing.
'Tis wrong to bring into a mix'd resort,
What makes some sick, and others *à-la-mort*.
An argument of cogence, we may say,
Why such a one should keep himself away.

A graver coxcomb we may sometimes see
Quite as absurd, though not so light as he:
A shallow brain behind a serious mask,
An oracle within an empty cask,
The solemn fop: significant and budge;
A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge;
He says but little, and that little said
Owes all its weight, like loaded dice, to lead.
His wit invites you by his looks to come,
But when you knock it never is at home:
'Tis like a parcel sent you by the stage,
Some handsome present, as your hopes presage;
'Tis heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove
An absent friend's fidelity and love;
But when unpack'd your disappointment groans,
To find it stuff'd with brickbats, earth, and stones.

Some men employ their health, an ugly trick,
In making known how oft they have been sick,
And give us in recitals of disease
A doctor's trouble, but without the fees;
Relate how many weeks they kept their bed,
How an emetic or cathartic sped;
Nothing is slightly touch'd, much less forgot,
Nose, ears, and eyes seem present on the spot.
Now the distemper, spite of draught or pill,
Victorious seem'd, and now the doctor's skill;
And now—alas, for unforeseen mishaps!
They put on a damp nightcap and relapse;
They thought they must have died, they were so
Their peevish hearers almost wish they had. [bad;

Some fretful tempers wince at every touch,
You always do too little or too much:
You speak with life in hopes to entertain,
Your elevated voice goes through the brain;
You fall at once into a lower key,
That's worse—the dronpipe of an humble-bee.
The southern sash admits too strong a light,
You rise and drop the curtain—now 'tis night.
He shakes with cold—you stir the fire and strive
To make a blaze—that's roasting him alive.
Serve him with venison, and he chooses fish;
With sole—that's just the sort he would not wish.
He takes what he at first profess'd to loathe,
And in due time feeds heartily on both;
Yet still, o'erclouded with a constant frown,
He does not swallow, but he gulps it down.
Your hope to please him vain on every plan,
Himself should work that wonder, if he can—
Alas! his efforts double his distress,
He likes yours little, and his own still less.

Thus always teasing others, always teased,
His only pleasure is—to be displeased.

I pity bashful men, who feel the pain
Of fancied scorn and undeserved disdain,
And bear the marks upon a blushing face
Of needless shame and self-imposed disgrace.
Our sensibilities are so acute,
The fear of being silent makes us mute.
We sometimes think we could a speech produce
Much to the purpose, if our tongues were loose;
But, being tried, it dies upon the lip,
Faint as a chicken's note that has the pip:
Our wasted oil unprofitably burns,
Like hidden lamps in old sepulchral urns.
Few Frenchmen of this evil have complain'd;
It seems as if we Britons were ordain'd,
By way of wholesome curb upon our pride,
To fear each other, fearing none beside.
The cause perhaps inquiry may descry,
Self-searching with an introverted eye,
Conceal'd within an unsuspected part,
The vainest corner of our own vain heart:
For ever aiming at the world's esteem,
Our self-importance ruins its own scheme;
In other eyes our talents rarely shown,
Become at length so splendid in our own,
We dare not risk them into public view,
Lest they miscarry of what seems their due.
True modesty is a discerning grace,
And only blushes in the proper place;
But counterfeit is blind, and skulks, through fear,
Where 'tis a shame to be ashamed to' appear;
Humility the parent of the first,
The last by vanity produced and nursed.

The circle form'd, we sit in silent state,
Like figures drawn upon a dial-plate;
Yes, ma'am, and no, ma'am, utter'd softly, show
Every five minutes how the minutes go;
Each individual, suffering a constraint,
Poetry may, but colours cannot paint,
As if in close committee on the sky,
Reports it hot or cold, or wet or dry;
And finds a changing clime a happy source
Of wise reflection, and well timed discourse.
We next inquire, but softly and by stealth,
Like conservators of the public health,
Of epidemic throats, if such there are,
And coughs and rheums, and phthisic and catarrh.
That theme exhausted, a wide chasm ensues,
Fill'd up at last with interesting news,
Who danced with whom, and who are like to wed,
And who is hang'd, and who is brought to bed:
But fear to call a more important cause,
As if 'twere treason against English laws.
The visit paid, with ecstasy we come,
As from a seven years' transportation, home,
And there resume an unembarrass'd brow,
Recovering what we lost we know not how,
The faculties, that seem'd reduced to nought,
Expression and the privilege of thought.

The reeking, roaring hero of the chase,
I give him over as a desperate case.
Physicians write in hopes to work a cure,
Never if honest ones, when death is sure;
And, though the fox he follows may be tamed,
A mere fox-follower never is reclaim'd.
Some farrier should prescribe his proper course,
Whose only fit companion is his horse,

Or if deserving of a better doom,
The noble beast judge otherwise, his groom.
Yet e'en the rogue that serves him, though he stand
To take his honour's orders, cap in hand,
Prefers his fellow grooms, with much good sense,
Their skill a truth, his master's a pretence.
If neither horse nor groom affect the squire,
Where can at last his jockeyship retire?
Oh, to the club, the scene of savage joys,
The school of coarse good fellowship and noise;
There, in the sweet society of those
Whose friendship from his boyish years he chose,
Let him improve his talent if he can,
Till none but beasts acknowledge him a man.

Man's heart had been impenetrably seal'd
Like theirs that cleave the flood or graze the field,
Had not his Maker's all-bestowing hand
Given him a soul, and bade him understand;
The reasoning power vouchsafed of course inferr'd
The power to clothe that reason with his word;
For all is perfect, that God works on earth,
And he, that gives conception, aids the birth.
If this be plain, 'tis plainly understood,
What uses of his boon the giver would.
The Mind, despatch'd upon her busy toil,
Should range where Providence has bless'd the
Visiting every flower with labour meet, [soil;
And gathering all her treasures sweet by sweet,
She should imbue the tongue with what she sips,
And shed the balmy blessing on the lips,
That good diffused may more abundant grow,
And speech may praise the power that bids it flow.
Will the sweet warbler of the livelong night,
That fills the listening lover with delight,

Forget his harmony, with rapture heard,
To learn the twittering of a meaner bird?
Or make the parrot's mimicry his choice,
That odious libel on a human voice?
No—Nature, unsophisticate by man,
Starts not aside from her Creator's plan;
The melody, that was at first design'd
To cheer the rude forefathers of mankind,
Is note for note deliver'd in our ears,
In the last scene of her six thousand years:
Yet Fashion, leader of a chattering train,
Whom man for his own hurt permits to reign,
Who shifts and changes all things but his shape,
And would degrade her votary to an ape,
The fruitful parent of abuse and wrong
Holds a usurp'd dominion o'er his tongue;
There sits and prompts him with his own disgrace,
Prescribes the theme, the tone, and the grimace,
And, when accomplish'd in her wayward school,
Calls gentleman whom she has made a fool.
'Tis an unalterable fix'd decree,
That none could frame or ratify but she,
That Heaven and Hell, and righteousness and sin,
Snares in his path, and foes that lurk within,
God and his attributes (a field of day
Where 'tis an angel's happiness to stray),
Fruits of his love, and wonders of his might,
Be never named in ears esteem'd polite;
That he who dares, when she forbids, be grave
Shall stand proscribed a madman or a knave,
A close designer not to be believed,
Or, if excused that charge, at least deceived.
Oh folly worthy of the nurse's lap,
Give it the breast, or stop its mouth with pap!

Is it incredible, or can it seem
A dream to any, except those that dream,
That man should love his Maker, and *that* fire,
Warming his heart, should at his lips transpire?
Know then, and modestly let fall your eyes,
And veil your daring crest that braves the skies;
That air of insolence affronts your God,
You need his pardon, and provoke his rod:
Now, in a posture that becomes you more
Than that heroic strut assumed before,
Know, your arrears with every hour accrue
For mercy shown, while wrath is justly due.
The time is short, and there are souls on earth,
Though future pain may serve for present mirth,
Acquainted with the woes, that fear or shame,
By Fashion taught, forbade them once to name,
And having felt the pangs you deem a jest,
Have proved them truths too big to be express'd.
Go seek on revelation's hallow'd ground,
Sure to succeed, the remedy they found: [mock,
Touch'd by that power that you have dared to
That makes seas stable, and dissolves the rock,
Your heart shall yield a life-renewing stream,
That fools, as you have done, shall call a dream.

It happen'd on a solemn eventide,
Soon after He that was our Surety died,
Two bosom friends, each pensively inclined,
The scene of all those sorrows left behind,
Sought their own village, busied as they went
In musings worthy of the great event:
They spake of him they loved, of him whose life,
Though blameless, had incurr'd perpetual strife,
Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,
A deep memorial graven on their hearts.

The recollection, like a vein of ore,
The farther traced, enrich'd them still the more;
They thought him, and they justly thought him, one
Sent to do more than he appear'd to' have done;
To' exalt a people, and to place them high
Above all else, and wonder'd he should die.
Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A stranger join'd them, courteous as a friend,
And ask'd them with a kind engaging air
What their affliction was, and begg'd a share.
Inform'd, he gather'd up the broken thread,
And, truth and wisdom gracing all he said,
Explain'd, illustrated, and search'd so well
The tender theme, on which they chose to dwell,
That, reaching home, the night, they said, is near,
We must not now be parted, sojourn here—
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,
And, made so welcome at their simple feast,
He bless'd the bread, but vanish'd at the word,
And left them both exclaiming, 'Twas the Lord!
Did not our hearts feel all he deign'd to say,
Did not they burn within us by the way?

Now theirs was converse, such as it behoves
Man to maintain, and such as God approves:
Their views indeed were indistinct and dim,
But yet successful, being aim'd at him;
Christ and his character their only scope,
Their object, and their subject, and their hope,
They felt what it became them much to feel,
And, wanting him to loose the sacred seal,
Found him as prompt as their desire was true,
To spread the newborn glories in their view.

Well—what are ages and the lapse of time
Match'd against truths as lasting as sublime?

Can length of years on God himself exact?
Or make that fiction, which was once a fact?
No—marble and recording brass decay,
And like the graver's memory pass away;
The works of man inherit, as is just,
Their author's frailty, and return to dust;
But truth divine for ever stands secure,
Its head is guarded as its base is sure;
Fix'd in the rolling flood of endless years,
The pillar of the' eternal plan appears,
The raving storm and dashing wave defies,
Built by that Architect who built the skies.
Hearts may be found, that harbour at this hour
That love of Christ, and all its quickening power;
And lips unstain'd by folly or by strife,
Whose wisdom, drawn from the deep well of life,
Tastes of its healthful origin, and flows
A Jordan for the' ablution of our woes.
O days of Heaven and nights of equal praise,
Serene and peaceful as those heavenly days,
When souls drawn upwards in communion sweet,
Enjoy the stillness of some close retreat,
Discourse, as if released and safe at home,
Of dangers past, and wonders yet to come,
And spread the sacred treasures of the breast
Upon the lap of covenanted Rest.

What, always dreaming over heavenly things,
Like angel heads in stone with pigeon wings?
Canting and whining out all day the word,
And half the night? fanatic and absurd!
Mine be the friend less frequent in his prayers,
Who makes no bustle with his soul's affairs,
Whose wit can brighten up a wintry day,
And chase the splenetic dull hours away;

Content on earth in earthly things to shine,
Who waits for Heaven ere he becomes divine,
Leaves saints to' enjoy those altitudes they teach,
And plucks the fruit placed more within his reach.

Well spoken, Advocate of sin and shame,
Known by thy bleating, Ignorance thy name.
Is sparkling wit the world's exclusive right?
The fix'd fee simple of the vain and light?
Can hopes of Heaven, bright prospects of an hour,
That come to waft us out of Sorrow's power,
Obscure or quench a faculty, that finds
Its happiest soil in the serenest minds?
Religion curbs indeed its wanton play,
And brings the trifle under rigorous sway,
But gives it usefulness unknown before,
And, purifying, makes it shine the more.
A Christian's wit is inoffensive light,
A beam that aids, but never grieves the sight;
Vigorous in age as in the flush of youth,
'Tis always active on the side of truth;
Temperance and peace insure its healthful state,
And make it brightest at its latest date.
Oh, I have seen (nor hope perhaps in vain,
Ere life go down, to see such sights again)
A veteran warrior in the Christian field,
Who never saw the sword he could not wield;
Grave without dulness, learned without pride,
Exact, yet not precise, though meek, keen eyed;
A man that would have foil'd at their own play
A dozen would-be's of the modern day;
Who, when occasion justified its use,
Had wit as bright as ready to produce,
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from philosophy's enlighten'd page,

His rich materials, and regale your ear
With strains it was a privilege to hear;
Yet above all his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory, was the Gospel theme;
There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence seem'd there at home,
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,
But to treat justly what he loved so well.

It moves me more perhaps than folly ought,
When some green heads, as void of wit as thought,
Suppose *themselves* monopolists of sense,
And wiser men's ability pretence.
Though time will wear us, and we must grow old,
Such men are not forgot as soon as cold,
Their fragrant memory will outlast their tomb,
Embalm'd for ever in its own perfume:
And to say truth, though in its early prime,
And when unstain'd with any grosser crime,
Youth has a sprightliness and fire to boast,
That in the valley of decline are lost,
And Virtue with peculiar charms appears,
Crown'd with the garland of life's blooming years;
Yet age, by long experience well inform'd,
Well read, well temper'd, with religion warm'd,
That fire abated, which impels rash youth,
Proud of his speed, to overshoot the truth,
As time improves the grape's authentic juice,
Mellows and makes the speech more fit for use,
And claims a reverence in its shortening day,
That 'tis an honour and a joy to pay.
The fruits of age, less fair, are yet more sound
Than those a brighter season pours around;
And, like the stores autumnal suns mature,
Through wintry rigours unimpair'd endure,

What is fanatic frenzy, scorn'd so much,
And dreaded more than a contagious touch?
I grant it dangerous, and approve your fear,
That fire is catching if you draw too near;
But sage observers oft mistake the flame,
And give true piety that odious name.
To tremble (as the creature of an hour
Ought at the view of an almighty power)
Before his presence, at whose awful throne
All tremble in all worlds, except our own,
To supplicate his mercy, love his ways,
And prize them above pleasure, wealth, or praise,
Though common sense, allow'd a casting voice,
And free from bias, must approve the choice,
Convicts a man fanatic in the' extreme,
And wild as madness in the world's esteem.
But that disease, when soberly defined,
Is the false fire of an o'erheated mind;
It views the truth with a distorted eye,
And either warps or lays it useless by:
'Tis narrow, selfish, arrogant, and draws
Its sordid nourishment from man's applause;
And while at heart sin unrelinquish'd lies,
Presumes itself chief favourite of the skies.
'Tis such a light as putrefaction breeds
In fly blown flesh, whereon the maggot feeds,
Shines in the dark, but, usher'd into day,
The stench remains, the lustre dies away.

True bliss, if man may reach it, is composed
Of hearts in union mutually disclosed;
And, farewell else all hope of pure delight,
Those hearts should be reclaim'd, renew'd, upright.
Bad men, profaning friendship's hallow'd name,
Form, in its stead, a covenant of shame:

A dark confederacy against the laws
Of virtue, and religion's glorious cause:
They build each other up with dreadful skill,
As bastions set point blank against God's will;
Enlarge and fortify the dread redoubt,
Deeply resolved to shut a Saviour out;
Call legions up from Hell to back the deed;
And, cursed with conquest, finally succeed.
But souls, that carry on a bless'd exchange
Of joys, they meet with in their heavenly range,
And with a fearless confidence make known
The sorrows sympathy esteems its own,
Daily derive increasing light and force
From such communion in their pleasant course,
Feel less the journey's roughness and its length,
Meet their opposers with united strength,
And, one in heart, in interest, and design,
Gird up each other to the race divine.

But conversation, choose what theme we may,
And chiefly when religion leads the way,
Should flow, like waters after summer showers,
Not as if raised by mere mechanic powers.
The Christian, in whose soul, though now distress'd,

Lives the dear thought of joys he once possess'd,
When all his glowing language issued forth
With God's deep stamp upon its current worth,
Will speak without disguise, and must impart;
Sad as it is, his undissembling heart
Abhors constraint, and dares not feign a zeal,
Or seem to boast a fire he does not feel.
The song of Sion is a tasteless thing,
Unless, when rising on a joyful wing,
The soul can mix with the celestial bands,
And give the strain the compass it demands.

Strange tidings these to tell a world, who treat
All but their own experience as deceit!
Will they believe, though credulous enough
To swallow much upon much weaker proof,
That there are bless'd inhabitants of earth,
Partakers of a new etherial birth,
Their hopes, desires, and purposes estranged
From things terrestrial, and divinely changed,
Their very language of a kind, that speaks
The soul's sure interest in the good she seeks,
Who deal with Scripture, its importance felt,
As Tully with philosophy once dealt,
And in the silent watches of the night,
And through the scenes of toil-renewing light,
The social walk, or solitary ride,
Keep still the dear companion at their side?
No—shame upon a self-disgracing age,
God's work may serve an ape upon a stage
With such a jest, as fill'd with hellish glee
Certain invisibles as shrewd as he;
But veneration or respect finds none,
Save from the subjects of that work alone.
The world, grown old, her deep discernment shows,
Claps spectacles on her sagacious nose,
Peruses closely the true Christian's face,
And finds it a mere mask of sly grimace,
Usurps God's office, lays his bosom bare,
And finds hypocrisy close lurking there.
And, serving God herself through mere constraint,
Concludes his unfeign'd love of him a feint.
And yet, God knows, look human nature through,
(And in due time the world shall know it too),
That since the flowers of Eden felt the blast,
That after man's defection laid all waste,

Sincerity towards the heart-searching God
Has made the new-born creature her abode,
Nor shall be found in unregenerate souls,
Till the last fire burn all between the poles.
Sincerity! Why 'tis his only pride,
Weak and imperfect in all grace beside,
He knows that God demands his heart entire,
And gives him all his just demands require.
Without it his pretensions were as vain
As, having it, he deems the world's disdain;
That great defect would cost him not alone
Man's favourable judgment, but his own:
His birthright shaken, and no longer clear,
Than while his conduct proves his heart sincere.
Retort the charge, and let the world be told
She boasts a confidence she does not hold;
That, conscious of her crimes, she feels instead
A cold misgiving, and a killing dread;
That while in health the ground of her support
Is madly to forget that life is short;
That sick she trembles, knowing she must die,
Her hope presumption, and her faith a lie;
That while she dotes, and dreams that she believes,
She mocks her maker, and herself deceives,
Her utmost reach, historical assent,
The doctrines warp'd to what they never meant;
That truth itself is in her head as dull
And useless as a candle in a skull,
And all her love of God, a groundless claim,
A trick upon the canvass, painted flame.
Tell her again, the sneer upon her face,
And all her censures of the work of grace,
Are insincere, meant only to conceal
A dread she would not,-yet is forced to feel;

That in her heart the Christian she reveres,
And, while she seems to scorn him, only fears.

A poet does not work by square or line,
As smiths and joiners perfect a design;
At least we moderns, our attention less,
Beyond the' example of our sires digress,
And claim a right to scamper and run wide,
Wherever chance, caprice, or fancy guide.
The world and I fortuitously met,
I owed a trifle, and have paid the debt;
She did me wrong, I recompensed the deed,
And, having struck the balance, now proceed.
Perhaps however as some years have pass'd,
Since she and I conversed together last,
And I have lived recluse in rural shades,
Which seldom a distinct report pervades,
Great changes and new manners have occur'd,
And bless'd reforms, that I have never heard,
And she may now be as discreet and wise,
As once absurd in all discerning eyes.
Sobriety perhaps may now be found,
Where once Intoxication press'd the ground;
The subtle and injurious may be just,
And he grown chaste that was the slave of lust;
Arts once esteem'd may be with shame dismiss'd;
Charity may relax the miser's fist;
The gamester may have cast his cards away,
Forgot to curse, and only kneel to pray.
It has indeed been told me (with what weight,
How credibly, 'tis hard for me to state)
That fables old, that seem'd for ever mute,
Reviv'd are hastening into fresh repute,
And gods and goddesses discarded long
Like useless lumber, or a stroller's song,

Are bringing into vogue their heathen train,
And Jupiter bids fair to rule again;
That certain feasts are instituted now,
Where Venus hears the lover's tender vow;
That all Olympus through the country roves,
To consecrate our few remaining groves,
And Echo learns politely to repeat
The praise of names for ages obsolete:
That having proved the weakness, it should seem,
Of Revelation's ineffectual beam,
To bring the passions under sober sway,
And give the moral springs their proper play,
They mean to try what may at last be done,
By stout substantial gods of wood and stone,
And whether Roman rites may not produce
The virtues of old Rome for English use.
May such success attend the pious plan,
May Mercury once more embellish man,
Grace him again with long forgotten arts,
Reclaim his taste, and brighten up his parts,
Make him athletic as in days of old,
Learn'd at the bar, in the palæstra bold,
Divest the rougher sex of female airs,
And teach the softer not to copy theirs;
The change shall please, nor shall it matter aught
Who works the wonder, if it be but wrought.

'Tis time, however, if the case stand thus,
For us plain folks, and all who side with us,
To build our altar, confident and bold,
And say as stern Elijah said of old,
The strife now stands upon a fair award,
If Israel's Lord be God, then serve the Lord:
If he be silent, faith is all a whim,
Then Baal is the God, and worship him.

Digression is so much in modern use,
Thought is so rare, and fancy so profuse,
Some never seem so wide of their intent,
As when returning to the theme they meant;
As mendicants, whose business is to roam,
Make every parish but their own their home.
Though such continual zigzags in a book,
Such drunken reelings have an awkward look,
And I had rather creep to what is true
Than rove and stagger, with no mark in view;
Yet to consult a little seem'd no crime,
The freakish humour of the present time:
But now to gather up what seems dispersed,
And touch the subject I design'd at first,
May prove, though much beside the rules of art,
Best for the public, and my wisest part.
And first let no man charge me that I mean
To clothe in sable every social scene,
And give good company a face severe,
As if they met around a father's bier;
For tell some men, that pleasure all their bent,
And laughter all their work, is life mispent,
Their wisdom bursts into this sage reply,
Then mirth is sin, and we should always cry.
To find the medium asks some share of wit,
And therefore 'tis a mark fools never hit.
But though life's valley be a vale of tears,
A brighter scene beyond that vale appears,
Whose glory with a light, that never fades,
Shoots between scatter'd rocks and opening
 shades,
And, while it shows the land the soul desires,
The language of the land she seeks inspires,
Thus touch'd, the tongue receives a sacred cure
Of all that was absurd, profane, impure;

Held within modest bounds, the tide of speech
 Pursues the course that Truth and Nature teach;
 No longer labours merely to produce
 The pomp of sound, or tinkle without use:
 Where'er it winds, the salutary stream,
 Sprightly and fresh, enriches every theme,
 While all the happy man possess'd before,
 The gift of nature, or the classic store,
 Is made subservient to the grand design,
 For which Heaven form'd the faculty divine.
 So should an idiot, while at large he strays,
 Find the sweet lyre, on which an artist plays,
 With rash and awkward force the chords he
 shakes,
 And grins with wonder at the jar he makes;
 But let the wise and well instructed hand
 Once take the shell beneath his just command,
 In gentle sounds it seems as it complain'd
 Of the rude injuries it late sustain'd,
 Till, tuned at length to some immortal song,
 It sounds Jehovah's name, and pours his praise
 along.

RETIREMENT.

———— stadiis florens ignobilis otl.
 VIRG. Georg. Lib. 4.

HACKNEY'D in business, wearied at that oar
 Which thousands, once fast chain'd to, quit no
 more,
 But which, when life at ebb runs weak and low,
 All wish, or seem to wish, they could forego;

The statesman, lawyer, merchant, man of trade
Pants for the refuge of some rural shade,
Where, all his long anxieties forgot
Amid the charms of a sequester'd spot,
Or recollected only to gild o'er,
And add a smile to what was sweet before,
He may possess the joys he thinks he sees,
Lay his old age upon the lap of Ease,
Improve the remnant of his wasted span,
And, having lived a trifler, die a man.
Thus Conscience pleads her cause within the
breast,

Though long rebell'd against, not yet suppress'd,
And calls a creature form'd for God alone,
For Heaven's high purposes, and not his own,
Calls him away from selfish ends and aims,
From what debilitates and what inflames,
From cities humming with a restless crowd,
Sordid as active, ignorant as loud,
Whose highest praise is that they live in vain,
The dupes of pleasure, or the slaves of gain,
Where works of man are cluster'd close around,
And works of God are hardly to be found,
To regions where, in spite of sin and woe,
Traces of Eden are still seen below,
Where mountain, river, forest, field, and grove,
Remind him of his Maker's power and love.
'Tis well if, look'd for at so late a day,
In the last scene of such a senseless play,
True wisdom will attend his feeble call,
And grace his action ere the curtain fall.
Souls that have long despised their heavenly birth,
Their wishes all impregnated with earth,

For threescore years employ'd with ceaseless care,
In catching smoke and feeding upon air,
Conversant only with the ways of men,
Rarely redeem the short remaining ten.
Inveterate habits choke the' unfruitful heart,
Their fibres penetrate its tenderest part,
And, draining its nutritious powers to feed
Their noxious growth, starve every better seed.

Happy, if full of days—but happier far,
If, ere we yet discern life's evening star,
Sick of the service of a world, that feeds
Its patient drudges with dry chaff and weeds,
We can escape from Custom's idiot sway,
To serve the Sovereign we were born to' obey.
Then sweet to muse upon the skill display'd
(Infinite skill) in all that he has made!
To trace in Nature's most minute design
The signature and stamp of power divine,
Contrivance intricate, express'd with ease,
Where unassisted sight no beauty sees,
The shapely limb and lubricated joint,
Within the small dimensions of a point,
Muscle and nerve miraculously spun,
His mighty work, who speaks and it is done,
The' invisible in things scarce seen reveal'd;
To whom an atom is an ample field;
To wonder at a thousand insect forms,
These hatch'd, and those resuscitated worms,
New life ordain'd and brighter scenes to share,
Once prone on earth, now buoyant upon air,
Whose shape would make them, had they bulk
and size,
More hideous foes than fancy can devise,

With helmet heads and dragon scales adorn'd,
The mighty myriads, now securely scorn'd,
Would mock the majesty of man's high birth,
Despise his bulwarks, and unpeople earth:
Then with a glance of fancy to survey,
Far as the faculty can stretch away,
Ten thousand rivers pour'd, at his command
From urns, that never fail, through every land:
These like a deluge with impetuous force,
Those winding modestly a silent course;
The cloud surmounting Alps, the fruitful vales;
Seas, on which every nation spreads her sails;
The sun, a world whence other worlds drink light,
The crescent moon, the diadem of night:
Stars countless, each in his appointed place,
Fast anchor'd in the deep abyss of space—
At such a sight to catch the poet's flame,
And with a rapture like his own exclaim,
These are thy glorious works, thou Source of good,
How dimly seen, how faintly understood!
Thine, and upheld by thy paternal care,
This universal frame, thus wondrous fair;
Thy power divine, and bounty beyond thought
Adored and praised in all that thou hast wrought.
Absorb'd in that immensity I see,
I shrink abased, and yet aspire to thee;
Instruct me, guide me to that heavenly day
Thy words, more clearly than thy works, display,
That, while thy truths my grosser thoughts refine,
I may resemble thee and call thee mine.
O bless'd proficiency! surpassing all
That men erroneously their glory call,
The recompense that arts or arms can yield,
The bar, the senate, or the tented field.

Compared with this sublimest life below,
Ye kings and rulers, what have courts to show?
Thus studied, used and consecrated thus,
On earth what is seems form'd indeed for us;
Not as the plaything of a froward child,
Fretful unless diverted and beguiled,
Much less to feed and fan the fatal fires
Of pride, ambition, or impure desires,
But as a scale by which the soul ascends
From mighty means to more important ends,
Securely, though by steps but rarely trod,
Mounts from inferior beings up to God,
And sees, by no fallacious light or dim,
Earth made for man, and man himself for him.

Not that I mean to' approve or would enforce
A superstitious or monastic course:
Truth is not local, God alike pervades
And fills the world of traffic and the shades,
And may be fear'd amidst the busiest scenes,
Or scorn'd where business never intervenes.
But 'tis not easy with a mind like ours,
Conscious of weakness in its noblest powers,
And in a world where, other ills apart,
The roving eye misleads the careless heart,
To limit Thought, by nature prone to stray
Wherever freakish Fancy points the way;
To bid the pleadings of Self-love be still,
Resign our own and seek our Maker's will;
To spread the page of Scripture, and compare
Our conduct with the laws engraven there;
To measure all that passes in the breast,
Faithfully, fairly, by that sacred test;
To dive into the secret deeps within,
To spare no passion and no favourite sin,

And search the themes, important above all,
Ourselves and our recovery from our fall.
But leisure, silence, and a mind released
From anxious thoughts how wealth may be increased,

How to secure, in some propitious hour,
The point of interest or the post of power,
A soul serene, and equally retired
From objects too much dreaded or desired,
Safe from the clamours of perverse dispute,
At least are friendly to the great pursuit.

Opening the map of God's extensive plan,
We find a little isle, this life of man;
Eternity's unknown expanse appears
Circling around and limiting his years.
The busy race examine and explore
Each creek and cavern of the dangerous shore,
With care collect, what in their eyes excels,
Some shining pebbles, and some weeds and shells;
Thus laden, dream that they are rich and great,
And happiest he that groans beneath his weight;
The waves o'ertake them in their serious play,
And every hour sweeps multitudes away;
They shriek and sink, survivors start and weep,
Pursue their sport, and follow to the deep.
A few forsake the throng; with lifted eyes
Ask wealth of Heaven, and gain a real prize,
Truth, wisdom, grace, and peace like that above,
Seal'd with his signet whom they serve and love;
Scorn'd by the rest, with patient hope they wait
A kind release from their imperfect state,
And unregretted are soon snatch'd away
From scenes of sorrow into glorious day.

Nor these alone prefer a life recluse,
Who seek retirement for its proper use;
The love of change that lives in every breast,
Genius, and temper, and desire of rest,
Discordant motives in one centre meet,
And each inclines its votary to retreat.
Some minds by nature are averse to noise,
And hate the tumult half the world enjoys,
The lure of avarice, or the pompous prize,
That courts display before ambitious eyes;
The fruits that hang on Pleasure's flowery stem,
Whate'er enchants them, are no snares to them.
To them the deep recess of dusky groves,
Or forest where the deer securely roves,
The fall of waters, and the song of birds,
And hills that echo to the distant herds,
Are luxuries excelling all the glare
The world can boast, and her chief favourites share.
With eager step, and carelessly array'd,
For such a cause the poet seeks the shade,
From all he sees he catches new delight,
Pleased Fancy claps her pinions at the sight,
The rising or the setting orb of day,
The clouds that flit or slowly float away.
Nature in all the various shapes she wears,
Frowning in storms, or breathing gentle airs,
The snowy robe her wintry state assumes,
Her summer heats, her fruits, and her perfumes,
All, all alike transport the glowing bard,
Success in rhyme his glory and reward.
O Nature! whose Elysian scenes disclose
His bright perfections at whose word they rose,
Next to that power, who form'd thee and sustains,
Be thou the great inspirer of my strains.

Still as I touch the lyre do thou expand
Thy genuine charms, and guide an artless hand,
That I may catch a fire but rarely known,
Give useful light, though I should miss renown,
And poring on thy page, whose every line
Bears proof of an intelligence divine,
May feel a heart enrich'd by what it pays,
That builds its glory on its Maker's praise.
Woe to the man whose wit disclaims its use,
Glittering in vain, or only to seduce,
Who studies Nature with a wanton eye,
Admires the work, but slips the lesson by;
His hours of leisure and recess employs
In drawing pictures of forbidden joys,
Retires to blazon his own worthless name,
Or shoot the careless with a surer aim.

The lover too shuns business and alarms,
Tender idolater of absent charms.

Saints offer nothing in their warmest prayers
That he devotes not with a zeal like theirs:

'Tis consecration of his heart, soul, time,
And every thought that wanders is a crime.
In sighs he worships his supremely fair,
And weeps a sad libation in despair,
Adores a creature, and, devout in vain,
Wins in return an answer of disdain.

As woodbine weds the plant within her reach,
Rough elm, or smooth-grain'd ash, or glossy beech,
In spiral rings ascends the trunk, and lays
Her golden tassels on the leafy sprays,
But does a mischief while she lends a grace,
Straitening its growth by such a strict embrace;
So Love, that clings around the noblest minds,
Forbids the advancement of the soul he binds;

The suitor's air indeed he soon improves,
And forms it to the taste of her he loves,
Teaches his eyes a language, and no less
Refines his speech, and fashions his address;
But farewell promises of happier fruits,
Manly designs, and learning's grave pursuits;
Girt with a chain he cannot wish to break,
His only bliss is sorrow for her sake;
Who will may pant for glory and excel,
Her smile his aim, all higher aims farewell!
Thyrsis, Alexis, or whatever name
May least offend against so pure a flame,
Though sage advice of friends the most sincere
Sounds harshly in so delicate an ear,
And lovers, of all creatures tame or wild,
Can least brook management, however mild,
Yet let a poet (poetry disarms
The fiercest animals with magic charms)
Risk an intrusion on thy pensive mood,
And woo and win thee to thy proper good.
Pastoral images and still retreats,
Umbrageous walks and solitary seats,
Sweet birds in concert with harmonious streams,
Soft airs, nocturnal vigils, and day dreams
Are all enchantments in a case like thine,
Conspire against thy peace with one design,
Sooth thee to make thee but a surer prey,
And feed the fire that wastes thy powers away.
Up—God has form'd thee with a wiser view,
Not to be led in chains, but to subdue,
Calls thee to cope with enemies, and first
Points out a conflict with thyself, the worst.
Woman indeed, a gift he would bestow
When he design'd a Paradise below,

The richest earthly boon his hands afford,
Deserves to be beloved, but not adored.
Post away swiftly to more active scenes,
Collect the scatter'd truths that study gleans,
Mix with the world, but with its wiser part,
No longer give an image all thine heart;
Its empire is not hers, nor is it thine,
'Tis God's just claim, prerogative divine.

Virtuous and faithful Heberden, whose skill
Attempts no task it cannot well fulfil,
Gives melancholy up to Nature's care,
And sends the patient into purer air.
Look where he comes—in this embower'd alcove
Stand close conceal'd, and see a statue move:
Lips busy, and eyes fix'd, foot falling slow,
Arms hanging idly down, hands clasp'd below,
Interpret to the marking eye distress,
Such as its symptoms can alone express.
That tongue is silent now; that silent tongue
Could argue once, could jest or join the song,
Could give advice, could censure or commend,
Or charm the sorrows of a drooping friend.
Renounced alike its office and its sport,
Its brisker and its graver strains fall short;
Both fail beneath a fever's secret sway,
And like a summer brook are pass'd away.
This is a sight for pity to peruse,
Till she resemble faintly what she views,
Till Sympathy contract a kindred pain,
Pierced with the woes that she laments in vain.
This, of all maladies that man infest,
Claims most compassion, and receives the least:
Job felt it when he groan'd beneath the rod
And the barb'd arrows of a frowning God;

And such emollients as his friends could spare,
Friends such as his for modern Jobs prepare.
Bless'd, rather cursed, with hearts that never feel,
Kept snug in caskets of close hammer'd steel,
With mouths made only to grin wide and eat,
And minds that deem derided pain a treat,
With limbs of British oak, and nerves of wire,
And wit that puppet prompters might inspire,
Their sovereign nostrum is a clumsy joke
On pangs enforced with God's severest stroke.
But with a soul, that ever felt the sting
Of sorrow, sorrow is a sacred thing:
Not to molest, or irritate, or raise
A laugh at his expense, is slender praise;
He that has not usurp'd the name of man,
Does all, and deems too little all, he can,
To' assuage the throbbings of the fester'd part,
And stanch the bleedings of a broken heart.
'Tis not, as heads that never ache suppose,
Forgery of fancy, and a dream of woes;
Man is a harp, whose chords elude the sight,
Each yielding harmony disposed aright;
The screws reversed (a task which if he please
God in a moment executes with ease)
Ten thousand thousand strings at once go loose,
Lost, till he tune them, all their power and use.
Then neither healthy wilds, nor scenes as fair
As ever recompensed the peasant's care,
Nor soft declivities with tufted hills,
Nor view of waters turning busy mills,
Parks in which Art preceptress Nature weds,
Nor gardens interspersed with flowery beds,
Nor gales that catch the scent of blooming groves,
And waft it to the mourner as he roves,

Can call up life into his faded eye,
That passes all he sees unheeded by:
No wounds like those a wounded spirit feels,
No cure for such, till God, who makes them, heals;
And thou, sad sufferer under nameless ill,
That yields not to the touch of human skill,
Improve the kind occasion, understand
A Father's frown, and kiss his chastening hand:
To thee the dayspring and the blaze of noon,
The purple evening and resplendent moon,
The stars, that, sprinkled o'er the vault of night,
Seem drops descending in a shower of light,
Shine not, or undesired and hated shine,
Seen through the medium of a cloud like thine:
Yet seek him, in his favour life is found,
All bliss beside a shadow or a sound:
Then Heaven, eclipsed so long, and this dull earth
Shall seem to start into a second birth!
Nature, assuming a more lovely face,
Borrowing a beauty from the works of grace,
Shall be despised and overlook'd no more,
Shall fill thee with delights unfelt before,
Impart to things inanimate a voice,
And bid her mountains and her hills rejoice;
The sound shall run along the winding vales,
And thou enjoy an Eden ere it fails.

Ye groves (the statesman at his desk exclaims
Sick of a thousand disappointed aims);
My patrimonial treasure and my pride,
Beneath your shades your gray possessor hide,
Receive me languishing for that repose
The servant of the public never knows.
Ye saw me once (ah, those regretted days
When boyish innocence was all my praise!)

Hour after hour delightfully allot
To studies then familiar, since forgot,
And cultivate a taste for ancient song,
Catching its ardour as I mused along;
Nor seldom, as propitious Heaven might send,
What once I valued and could boast, a friend,
Were witnesses how cordially I press'd
His undissembling virtue to my breast:
Receive me now not uncorrupt as then,
Nor guiltless of corrupting other men,
But versed in arts, that, while they seem to stay
A falling empire, hasten its decay,
To the fair haven of my native home,
The wreck of what I was, fatigued I come,
For once I can approve the patriot's voice,
And make the course he recommends my choice:
We meet at last in one sincere desire,
His wish and mine both prompt me to retire.
'Tis done—he steps into the welcome chaise,
Lolls at his ease behind four handsome bays,
That whirl away from business and debate
The disencumber'd Atlas of the state.
Ask not the boy who, when the breeze of morn
First shakes the glittering drops from every thorn,
Unfolds his flock, then under bank or bush
Sinks linking cherry-stones, or plaiting rush,
How fair is Freedom?—he was always free:
To carve his rustic name upon a tree,
To snare the mole, or with ill fashion'd hook
To draw the incautious minnow from the brook,
Are life's prime pleasures in his simple view,
His flock the chief concern he ever knew;
She shines but little in his heedless eyes,
The good we never miss we rarely prize:

But ask the noble drudge in state affairs,
Escaped from office and its constant cares,
What charms he sees in Freedom's smile express'd,
In Freedom lost so long, now repossess'd;
The tongue, whose strains were cogent as commands,

Revered at home and felt in foreign lands,
Shall own itself a stammerer in that cause,
Or plead its silence as its best applause.
He knows indeed, that, whether dress'd or rude,
Wild without art, or artfully subdued,
Nature in every form inspires delight,
But never mark'd her with so just a sight.
Her hedgerow shrubs, a variegated store,
With woodbine and wild roses mantled o'er,
Green balks and furrow'd lands, the stream that
spreads

Its cooling vapour o'er the dewy meads,
Downs that almost escape the' inquiring eye,
That melt and fade into the distant sky,
Beauties he lately slighted as he pass'd,
Seem all created since he travel'd last.
Master of all the' enjoyments he design'd,
No rough annoyance rankling in his mind,
What early philosophic hours he keeps,
How regular his meals, how sound he sleeps!
Not sounder he, that on the mainmast head,
While morning kindles with a windy red,
Begins a long look out for distant land,
Nor quits till evening watch his giddy stand,
Then, swift descending with a seaman's haste,
Slips to his hammock, and forgets the blast.
He chooses company, but not the squire's,
Whose wit is rudeness, whose good breeding tires;

Nor yet the parson's, who would gladly come,
Obsequious when abroad, though proud at home;
Nor can he much affect the neighbouring peer,
Whose toe of emulation treads too near;
But wisely seeks a more convenient friend,
With whom dismissing forms he may unbend!
A man, whom marks of condescending grace
Teach, while they flatter him, his proper place;
Who comes when call'd, and at a word withdraws,
Speaks with reserve, and listens with applause;
Some plain mechanic, who, without pretence
To birth or wit, nor gives nor takes offence;
On whom he rests well pleased his weary powers,
And talks and laughs away his vacant hours.
The tide of life, swift always in its course,
May run in cities with a brisker force,
But no where with a current so serene,
Or half so clear, as in the rural scene.
Yet how fallacious is all earthly bliss,
What obvious truths the wisest heads may miss:
Some pleasures live a month, and some a year,
But short the date of all we gather here;
No happiness is felt, except the true,
That does not charm the more for being new.
This observation, as it chanced, not made,
Or if the thought occur'd, not duly weigh'd,
He sighs—for after all by slow degrees
The spot he loved has lost the power to please;
To cross his ambling pony day by day
Seems at the best but dreaming life away;
The prospect, such as might enchant despair,
He views it not, or sees no beauty there;
With aching heart and discontented looks
Returns at noon to billiards or to books,

But feels, while grasping at his faded joys,
A secret thirst of his renounced employs.
He chides the tardiness of every post,
Pants to be told of battles won or lost,
Blames his own indolence, observes, though late,
'Tis criminal to leave a sinking state,
Flies to the levee, and, received with grace,
Kneels, kisses hands, and shines again in place.

Suburban villas, highway-side retreats,
That dread the' encroachment of our growing
streets,

Tight boxes neatly sash'd, and in a blaze
With all a July sun's collected rays,
Delight the citizen, who, gasping there,
Breathes clouds of dust, and calls it country air.
O sweet retirement, who would balk the thought,
That could afford retirement, or could not?

'Tis such an easy walk, so smooth and straight,
The second milestone fronts the garden gate;
A step if fair, and, if a shower approach,
You find safe shelter in the next stage coach,
There, prison'd in a parlour snug and small,
Like bottled wasps upon a southern wall,
The man of business and his friends compress'd
Forget their labours, and yet find no rest;
But still 'tis rural—trees are to be seen
From every window, and the fields are green;
Ducks paddle in the pond before the door,
And what could a remoter scene show more?
A sense of elegance we rarely find

The portion of a mean or vulgar mind,
And ignorance of better things makes man,
Who cannot much, rejoice in what he can;
And he that deems his leisure well bestow'd
In contemplation of a turnpike road,

Is occupied as well, employs his hours
As wisely, and as much improves his powers
As he that slumbers in pavilions graced
With all the charms of an 'accomplish'd taste.
Yet hence, alas! insolvencies; and hence
The' unpitied victim of ill judged expense,
From all his wearisome engagements freed,
Shakes hands with business, and retires indeed.
Your prudent grandmamas, ye modern belles,
Content with Bristol, Bath, and Tunbridge Wells,
When health required it would consent to roam,
Else more attach'd to pleasures found at home,
But now alike gay widow, virgin, wife,
Ingenious to diversify dull life,
In coaches, chaises, caravans, and hoys,
Fly to the coast for daily, nightly joys,
And all, impatient of dry land, agree
With one consent to rush into the sea.—
Ocean exhibits, fathomless and broad,
Much of the power and majesty of God.
He swathes about the swelling of the deep,
That shines and rests as infants smile and sleep;
Vast as it is, it answers as it flows
The breathings of the lightest air that blows,
Curling and whitening over all the waste,
The rising waves obey the' increasing blast,
Abrupt and horrid as the tempest roars,
Thunder and flash upon the steadfast shores,
Till he that rides the whirlwind checks the rein,
Then all the world of waters sleeps again.—
Nereids or Dryads, as the fashion leads,
Now in the floods, now panting in the meads,
Votaries of Pleasure still, where'er she dwells,
Near barren rocks, in palaces, or cells,

O, grant a poet leave to recommend
 (A poet fond of Nature, and your friend)
 Her slighted works to your admiring view;
 Her works must needs excel who fashion'd you.
 Would ye, when rambling in your morning ride,
 With some unmeaning coxcomb at your side,
 Condemn the prattler for his idle pains,
 To waste unheard the music of his strains,
 And, deaf to all the' impertinence of tongue,
 That while it courts affronts and does you wrong,
 Mark well the finish'd plan without a fault,
 The seas globose and huge, the' o'erarching vault,
 Earth's millions daily fed, a world employ'd
 In gathering plenty yet to be enjoy'd,
 Till gratitude grew vocal in the praise
 Of God beneficent in all his ways: [shine!
 Graced with such wisdom, how would beauty
 Ye want but that to seem indeed divine.

Anticipated rents and bills unpaid
 Force many a shining youth into the shade,
 Not to redeem his time, but his estate,
 And play the fool, but at a cheaper rate.
 There, hid in loathed obscurity, removed
 From pleasures left, but never more beloved,
 He just endures, and with a sickly spleen
 Sighs o'er the beauties of the charming scene.
 Nature indeed looks prettily in rhyme;
 Streams tinkle sweetly in poetic chime:
 The warblings of the blackbird, clear and strong,
 Are musical enough in Thomson's song;
 And Cobham's groves, and Windsor's green re-
 treats, [sweets;
 When Pope describes them, have a thousand

He likes the country, but in truth must own,
Most likes it when he studies it in town.

Poor Jack—no matter who—for when I blame
I pity, and must therefore sink the name,
Lived in his saddle, loved the chase, the course,
And always ere he mounted kiss'd his horse.
The' estate his sires had own'd in ancient years
Was quickly distanced, match'd against a peer's.
Jack vanish'd, was regretted and forgot:
'Tis wild good nature's never failing lot.
At length, when all had long supposed him dead,
By cold submersion, razor, rope, or lead,
My lord, alighting at his usual place
The Crown, took notice of an ostler's face.
Jack knew his friend, but hoped in that disguise
He might escape the most observing eyes,
And whistling, as if unconcern'd and gay,
Carried his nag, and look'd another way.
Convinced at last upon a nearer view
'Twas he, the same, the very Jack he knew,
O'erwhelm'd at once with wonder, grief, and joy,
He press'd him much to quit his base employ;
His countenance, his purse, his heart, his hand,
Influence and power, were all at his command:
Peers are not always generous as well bred,
But Granby was, meant truly what he said.
Jack bow'd, and was obliged—confess'd 'twas
strange

That so retired he should not wish a change,
But knew no medium between guzzling beer
And his old stint—three thousand pounds a year.

Thus some retire to nourish hopeless woe;
Some seeking happiness not found below;

Some to comply with humour, and a mind
To social scenes by nature disinclined;
Some sway'd by fashion, some by deep disgust:
Some self-impovertish'd, and because they must;
But few that court Retirement are aware
Of half the toils they must encounter there.

Lucrative offices are seldom lost
For want of powers proportion'd to the post:
Give e'en a dunce the' employment he desires,
And he soon finds the talents it requires:
A business with an income at its heels
Furnishes always oil for its own wheels.
But in his arduous enterprise to close
His active years with indolent repose,
He finds the labours of that state exceed
His utmost faculties, severe indeed.
'Tis easy to resign a toilsome place,
But not to manage leisure with a grace;
Absence of occupation is not rest,
A mind quite vacant, is a mind distress'd.
The veteran steed, excused his task at length,
In kind compassion of his failing strength,
And turn'd into the park or mead to graze,
Exempt from future service all his days,
There feels a pleasure perfect in its kind,
Ranges at liberty and snuffs the wind:
But when his lord would quit the busy road,
To taste a joy like that he had bestow'd,
He proves less happy than his favour'd brute,
A life of ease a difficult pursuit.
Thought, to the man that never thinks, may seem
As natural as when asleep to dream:
But reveries (for human minds will act)
Specious in show, impossible in fact,



Those flimsy webs, that break as soon as wrought,
Attain not to the dignity of thought:
Nor yet the swarms that occupy the brain,
Where dreams of dress, intrigue, and pleasure
Nor such as useless conversation breeds, [reign;
Or lust engenders, and indulgence feeds.
Whence, and what are we? to what end ordain'd?
What means the drama by the world sustain'd?
Business or vain amusement, care or mirth,
Divide the frail inhabitants of earth.
Is duty a mere sport, or an employ?
Life an intrusted talent, or a toy?
Is there, as reason, conscience, Scripture say,
Cause to provide for a great future day,
When, earth's assign'd duration at an end,
Man shall be summon'd and the dead attend?
The trumpet—will it sound? the curtain rise?
And show the' august tribunal of the skies,
Where no prevarication shall avail,
Where eloquence and artifice shall fail,
The pride of arrogant distinctions fall,
And conscience and our conduct judge us all?
Pardon me, ye that give the midnight oil
To learned cares or philosophic toil,
Though I revere your honourable names,
Your useful labours and important aims,
And hold the world indebted to your aid,
Enrich'd with the discoveries ye have made;
Yet let me stand excused, if I esteem
A mind employ'd on so sublime a theme,
Pushing her bold inquiry to the date
And outline of the present transient state,
And, after poisoning her adventurous wings,
Settling at last upon eternal things,

Far more intelligent, and better taught
The strenuous use of profitable thought,
Than ye, when happiest, and enlighten'd most,
And highest in renown, can justly boast.

A mind unnerved, or indisposed to bear
The weight of subjects worthiest of her care,
Whatever hopes a change of scene inspires,
Must change her nature, or in vain retires.
An idler is a watch that wants both hands,
As useless if it goes as when it stands.
Books therefore, not the scandal of the shelves,
In which lewd sensualists print out themselves;
Nor those in which the stage gives vice a blow,
With what success let modern manners show;
Nor his who, for the bane of thousands born,
Built God a church, and laugh'd his word to scorn,
Skilful alike to seem devout and just,
And stab religion with a sly side-thrust;
Nor those of learn'd philologists, who chase
A panting syllable through time and space,
Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark,
To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's ark;
But such as Learning without false pretence,
The friend of Truth, the' associate of Good Sense,
And such as, in the zeal of good design,
Strong Judgment labouring in the Scripture mine,
All such as manly and great souls produce,
Worthy to live, and of eternal use:
Behold in these what leisure hours demand,
Amusement and true knowledge hand in hand.
Luxury gives the mind a childish cast,
And, while she polishes, perverts the taste;
Habits of close attention, thinking heads,
Become more rare as dissipation spreads,

Till authors hear at length one general cry,
Tickle and entertain us, or we die.
The loud demand, from year to year the same,
Beggars Invention, and makes Fancy lame;
Till farce itself, most mournfully jejune,
Calls for the kind assistance of a tune;
And novels (witness every month's review)
Belie their name, and offer nothing new.
The mind, relaxing into needful sport,
Should turn to writers of an abler sort,
Whose wit well managed, and whose classic style,
Give truth a lustre, and make wisdom smile.
Friends (for I cannot stint, as some have done
Too rigid in my view, that name to one;
Though one, I grant it, in the generous breast
Will stand advanced a step above the rest:
Flowers by that name promiscuously we call,
But one, the rose, the regent of them all)—
Friends, not adopted with a schoolboy's haste,
But chosen with a nice discerning taste,
Well born, well disciplined, who, placed apart
From vulgar minds, have honour much at heart,
And, though the world may think the' ingredients
The love of virtue, and the fear of God; [odd;
Such friends prevent what else would soon suc-
A temper rustic as the life we lead, [ceed,
And keep the polish of the manners clean
As theirs who bustle in the busiest scene;
For solitude, however some may rave,
Seeming a sanctuary, proves a grave,
A sepulchre, in which the living lie,
Where all good qualities grow sick and die.
I praise the Frenchman¹, his remark was shrewd—
How sweet, how passing sweet is solitude!

¹ Bruyère.

But grant me still a friend in my retreat,
Whom I may whisper—solitude is sweet.
Yet neither these delights, nor aught beside,
That appetite can ask, or wealth provide,
Can save us always from a tedious day,
Or shine the dulness of still life away;
Divine communion, carefully enjoy'd,
Or sought with energy, must fill the void.
O sacred art, to which alone life owes
Its happiest seasons, and a peaceful close,
Scorn'd in a world, indebted to that scorn
For evils daily felt and hardly borne,
Not knowing thee, we reap with bleeding hands
Flowers of rank odour upon thorny lands,
And, while Experience cautions us in vain,
Grasp seeming happiness, and find it pain.
Despondence, self-deserted in her grief,
Lost by abandoning her own relief,
Murmuring and ungrateful Discontent,
That scorns afflictions mercifully meant,
Those humours tart as wine upon the fret,
Which idleness and weariness beget; [breast,
These, and a thousand plagues that haunt the
Fond of the phantom of an earthly rest,
Divine communion chases, as the day
Drives to their dens the' obedient beasts of prey,
See Judah's promised king, bereft of all,
Driven out an exile from the face of Saul,
To distant caves the lonely wanderer flies,
To seek that peace a tyrant's frown denies.
Hear the sweet accents of his tuneful voice,
Hear him, o'erwhelm'd with sorrow, yet rejoice;
No womanish or wailing grief has part,
No, not for a moment, in his royal heart;

'Tis manly music, such as martyrs make,
Suffering with gladness for a Saviour's sake;
His soul exults, hope animates his lays,
The sense of mercy kindles into praise,
And wilds, familiar with a lion's roar,
Ring with ecstatic sounds unheard before;
'Tis love like his, that can alone defeat
The foes of man, or make a desert sweet.

Religion does not censure or exclude
Unnumber'd pleasures harmlessly pursued;
To study culture, and with artful toil
To meliorate and tame the stubborn soil;
To give dissimilar yet fruitful lands
The grain, or herb, or plant, that each demands;
To cherish virtue in an humble state,
And share the joys your bounty may create;
To mark the matchless workings of the power,
That shuts within its seed the future flower,
Bids these in elegance of form excel,
In colour these, and those delight the smell,
Sends Nature forth the daughter of the skies,
To dance on earth, and charm all human eyes;
To teach the canvass innocent deceit,
Or lay the landscape on the snowy sheet—
These, these are arts pursued without a crime,
That leave no stain upon the wing of time.

Me poetry (or rather notes that aim
Feebly and vainly at poetic fame)
Employs, shut out from more important views,
Fast by the banks of the slow winding Ouse;
Content if thus sequester'd I may raise
A monitor's, though not a poet's praise,
And while I teach an art too little known,
To close life wisely, may not waste my own.

YARDLEY OAK.

1791.

SURVIVOR sole, and hardly such, of all
 That once lived here, thy brethren, at my birth
 (Since which I number threescore winters past),
 A shatter'd veteran, hollow-trunk'd perhaps,
 As now, and with excoriate forks deform,
 Relics of ages! Could a mind, imbued
 With truth from Heaven, created thing adore,
 I might with reverence kneel, and worship thee.

It seems idolatry with some excuse,
 When our forefather Druids in their oaks
 Imagined sanctity. The conscience, yet
 Unpurified by an authentic act
 Of amnesty, the meed of blood divine,
 Loved not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom
 Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste
 Of fruit proscribed, as to a refuge, fled.

Thou wast a bauble once; a cup and ball,
 Which babes might play with; and the thievish jay,
 Seeking her food, with ease might have purloin'd
 The auburn nut that held thee, swallowing down
 Thy yet close-folded latitude of boughs
 And all thine embryo vastness at a gulp.
 But Fate thy growth decreed; autumnal rains
 Beneath thy parent tree mellow'd the soil
 Design'd thy cradle; and a skipping deer,
 With pointed hoof dibbling the glebe, prepared
 The soft receptacle, in which, secure,
 Thy rudiments should sleep the winter through.

So Fancy dreams. Disprove it if ye can,
Ye reasoners broad awake, whose busy search
Of argument, employ'd too oft amiss,
Sifts half the pleasures of short life away!

Thou fell'st mature; and in the loamy clod
Swelling with vegetative force instinct
Didst burst thine egg, as theirs the fabled Twins,
Now stars; two lobes, protruding, pair'd exact;
A leaf succeeded, and another leaf,
And, all the elements thy puny growth
Fostering propitious, thou becamest a twig.

Who lived, when thou wast such? Oh, couldst
thou speak,

As in Dodona once thy kindred trees
Oracular, I would not curious ask
The future, best unknown, but at thy mouth
Inquisitive, the less ambiguous past.

By thee I might correct, erroneous oft,
The clock of history, facts and events
Timing more punctual, and recorded facts
Recovering, and mistated setting right—
Desperate attempt, till trees shall speak again!

Time made thee what thou wast, king of the
woods;

And Time hath made thee what thou art—a cave
For owls to roost in. Once thy spreading boughs
O'erhung the champaign; and the numerous flocks,
That grazed it, stood beneath that ample cope
Uncrowded, yet safe-shelter'd from the storm.
No flock frequents thee now. Thou hast outlived
Thy popularity, and art become
(Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing
Forgotten, as the foliage of thy youth.

While thus through all the stages thou hast
push'd

Of treeship—first a seedling, hid in grass;
Then twig; then sapling; and, as century roll'd
Slow after century, a giant-bulk
Of girth enormous, with moss-cushion'd root
Upheaved above the soil, and sides emboss'd
With prominent wens globose—till at the last
The rottenness, which time is charged to inflict
On other mighty ones, found also thee.

What exhibitions various hath the world
Witness'd of mutability in all
That we account most durable below!
Change is the diet on which all subsist,
Created changeable, and change at last
Destroys them. Skies uncertain now the heat
Transmitting cloudless, and the solar beam
Now quenching in a boundless sea of clouds—
Calm and alternate storm, moisture and drought,
Invigorate by turns the springs of life
In all that live, plant, animal, and man,
And in conclusion mar them. Nature's threads,
Fine passing thought, e'en in her coarsest works,
Delight in agitation, yet sustain
The force, that agitates, not unimpair'd;
But, worn by frequent impulse, to the cause
Of their best tone their dissolution owe.

Thought cannot spend itself, comparing still
The great and little of thy lot, thy growth
From almost nullity into a state
Of matchless grandeur, and declension thence,
Slow, into such magnificent decay.
Time was, when, settling on thy leaf, a fly
Could shake thee to the root—and time has been
When tempests could not. At thy firmest age
Thou hadst within thy bole solid contents,

That might have ribb'd the sides and plank'd the
deck

Of some flagg'd admiral; and tortuous arms,
The shipwright's darling treasure, didst present
To the four-quarter'd winds, robust and bold,
Warp'd into tough knee-timber¹, many a load!
But the axe spared thee. In those thriftier days
Oaks fell not, hewn by thousands, to supply
The bottomless demands of contest, waged
For senatorial honours. Thus to Time
The task was left to whittle thee away
With his sly scythe, whose ever nibbling edge,
Noiseless, an atom, and an atom more
Disjoining from the rest, has, unobserved,
Achieved a labour, which had far and wide,
By man perform'd, made all the forest ring.

Embowel'd now, and of thy ancient self
Possessing nought but the scoop'd rind, that seems
An huge throat, calling to the clouds for drink,
Which it would give in rivulets to thy root,
Thou temptest none, but rather much forbidd'st
The feller's toil, which thou couldst ill requite.
Yet is thy root sincere, sound as the rock,
A quarry of stout spurs, and knotted fangs,
Which, crook'd into a thousand whimseys, clasp
The stubborn soil, and hold thee still erect.

So stands a kingdom, whose foundation yet
Fails not, in virtue and in wisdom laid,
Though all the superstructure, by the tooth
Pulverized of venality, a shell
Stands now, and semblance only of itself!

¹ Knee-timber is found in the crooked arms of oak, which, by reason of their distortion, are easily adjusted to the angle formed where the deck and the ship's sides meet.

Thine arms have left thee. Winds have rent
them off

Long since, and rovers of the forest wild
With bow and shaft have burn'd them. Some
have left

A splinter'd stump, bleach'd to a snowy white;
And some, memorial none, where once they grew.
Yet life still lingers in thee, and puts forth
Proof not contemptible of what she can,
Even where death predominates. The spring
Finds thee not less alive to her sweet force
Than yonder upstarts of the neighbouring wood,
So much thy juniors, who their birth received
Half a millenium since the date of thine.

But since, although well qualified by age
To teach, no spirit dwells in thee, nor voice
May be expected from thee, seated here
On thy distorted root, with hearers none,
Or prompter, save the scene, I will perform
Myself the oracle, and will discourse
In my own ear such matter as I may.

One man alone, the father of us all,
Drew not his life from woman; never gazed,
With mute unconsciousness of what he saw,
On all around him; learn'd not by degrees,
Nor owed articulation to his ear;
But, moulded by his Maker into man
At once, upstood intelligent, survey'd
All creatures, with precision understood
Their purport, uses, properties, assign'd
To each his name significant, and, fill'd
With love and wisdom, render'd back to Heaven
In praise harmonious the first air he drew,
He was excused the penalties of dull

Minority. No tutor charged his hand
With the thought-tracing quill, or task'd his mind
With problems. History, not wanted yet,
Lean'd on her elbow, watching Time, whose course,
Eventful, should supply her with a theme.

ON THE

RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT
OF NORFOLK.

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN ANNE BODHAM.

O THAT those lips had language! Life has pass'd
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
'Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!'
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Bless'd be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it!) here shines on me still the same.

Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidd'st me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own:
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream, that thou art she.

My mother! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was—where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wish'd, I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived.
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learn'd at last submission to my lot,
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.

Where once we dwelt our name is heard no
more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapp'd
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet cap,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we call'd the pastoral house our own.

Shortlived possession! but the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit or confectionary plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glow'd;
All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and breaks,
That humour interposed too often makes;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorn'd in heaven, though little noticed here.

Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I prick'd them into paper with a pin
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head, and
smile),

Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them
here?

I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,

That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weather'd and the ocean cross'd)
Shoots into port at some well haven'd isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reach'd the
shore

' Where tempests never beat nor billows roar¹,'
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchor'd by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distress'd—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-toss'd,
Sails ripp'd, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
Yet O the thought that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not, that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents pass'd into the skies.
And now farewell—Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wish'd is done.
By Contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to' have liv'd my childhood o'er again;
To have renew'd the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine;

¹ Garth,

And, while the wings of Fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thyself removed, thy power to sooth me left.

HEROISM.

THERE was a time when Ætna's silent fire
Slept unperceived, the mountain yet entire:
When, conscious of no danger from below,
She tower'd a cloud-capp'd pyramid of snow.
No thunders shook with deep intestine sound
The blooming groves that girdled her around.
Her unctuous olives, and her purple vines
(Unfelt the fury of those bursting mines),
The peasant's hopes, and not in vain, assured,
In peace upon her sloping sides matured:
When on a day, like that of the last doom,
A conflagration labouring in her womb,
She teem'd and heaved with an infernal birth
That shook the circling seas and solid earth,
Dark and voluminous the vapours rise,
And hang their horrors in the neighbouring skies,
While through the Stygian veil that blots the day,
In dazzling streaks the vivid lightnings play.
But oh! what Muse, and in what powers of song,
Can trace the torrent as it burns along?
Havoc and devastation in the van,
It marches o'er the prostrate works of man;
Vines, olives, herbage, forests disappear,
And all the charms of a Sicilian year.
Revolving seasons, fruitless as they pass,
See it an uninform'd and idle mass;

Without a soil to' invite the tiller's care,
Or blade that might redeem it from despair.
Yet Time at length (what will not time achieve?)
Clothes it with earth, and bids the produce live.
Once more the spiry myrtle crowns the glade,
And ruminating flocks enjoy the shade.
O bliss precarious, and unsafe retreats,
O charming Paradise of shortlived sweets!
The selfsame gale that wafts the fragrance round
Brings to the distant year a sullen sound;
Again the mountain feels the' imprison'd foe,
Again pours ruin on the vale below.
Ten thousand swains the wasted scene deplore,
That only future ages can restore.

Ye monarchs, whom the lure of honour draws,
Who write in blood the merits of your cause,
Who strike the blow, then plead your own defence,
Glory your aim, but justice your pretence,
Behold in Ætna's emblematic fires
The mischiefs your ambitious pride inspires!

Fast by the stream that bounds your just domain,
And tells you where ye have a right to reign,
A nation dwells, not envious of your throne,
Studious of peace, their neighbours', and their own.
Ill fated race! how deeply must they rue
Their only crime, vicinity to you!
The trumpet sounds, your legions swarm abroad,
Through the ripe harvest lies their destined road;
At every step beneath their feet they tread
The life of multitudes, a nation's bread!
Earth seems a garden in its loveliest dress
Before them, and behind a wilderness.
Famine, and Pestilence, her firstborn son,
Attend to finish what the sword begun;

And echoing praises, such as fiends might earn,
And Folly pays, resound at your return.
A calm succeeds—but Plenty, with her train
Of heartfelt joys, succeeds not soon again,
And years of pining indigence must show
What scourges are the gods that rule below.

Yet man, laborious man, by slow degrees
(Such is his thirst of opulence and ease),
Plies all the sinews of industrious toil,
Gleans up the refuse of the general spoil,
Rebuilds the towers that smoked upon the plain,
And the sun gilds the shining spires again.

Increasing commerce and reviving art
Renew the quarrel on the conqueror's part;
And the sad lesson must be learn'd once more
That wealth within is ruin at the door.
What are ye, monarchs, laurel'd heroes, say,
But Ætnas of the suffering world ye sway?
Sweet Nature, stripp'd of her embroider'd robe,
Deplores the wasted regions of her globe;
And stands a witness at Truth's awful bar,
To prove you there destroyers as ye are.

O, place me in some Heaven-protected isle,
Where Peace, and Equity, and Freedom smile;
Where no volcano pours his fiery flood,
No crested warrior dips his plume in blood;
Where Power secures what Industry has won:
Where to succeed is not to be undone;
A land that distant tyrants hate in vain,
In Britain's isle, beneath a George's reign!

FRIENDSHIP.

Amicitia nisi inter bonos esse non potest.

CICERO.

1782.

WHAT virtue, or what mental grace,
But men unqualified and base

Will boast it their possession?
Profusion apes the noble part
Of liberality of heart,
And dulness of discretion.

If every polish'd gem we find,
Illuminating heart or mind,
Provoke to imitation;
No wonder Friendship does the same,
That jewel of the purest flame,
Or rather constellation.

No knave but boldly will pretend
The requisites that form a friend,
A real and a sound one;
Nor any fool he would deceive,
But prove as ready to believe,
And dream that he had found one.

Candid, and generous, and just,
Boys care but little whom they trust;
An error soon corrected—
For who but learns in riper years,
That man, when smoothest he appears,
Is most to be suspected?

But here again a danger lies,
Lest, having misapplied our eyes,
And taken trash for treasure,
We should unwarily conclude
Friendship a false ideal good,
A mere Utopian pleasure.

An acquisition rather rare
Is yet no subject of despair;
Nor is it wise complaining,
If either on forbidden ground,
Or where it was not to be found,
We sought without attaining.

No friendship will abide the test,
That stands on sordid interest,
Or mean self love erected;
Nor such as may awhile subsist
Between the sot and sensualist,
For vicious ends connected.

Who seeks a friend should come disposed
To' exhibit in full bloom disclosed
The graces and the beauties
That form the character he seeks;
For 'tis a union that bespeaks
Reciprocated duties.

Mutual attention is implied,
And equal truth on either side,
And constantly supported:
'Tis senseless arrogance to' accuse
Another of sinister views,
Our own as much distorted.

But will sincerity suffice?
It is indeed above all price,
And must be made the basis;
But every virtue of the soul
Must constitute the charming whole,
All shining in their places.

A fretful temper will divide
The closest knot that may be tied,
By ceaseless sharp corrosion;
A temper passionate and fierce
May suddenly your joys disperse
At one immense explosion.

In vain the talkative unite
In hopes of permanent delight—
The secret just committed,
Forgetting its important weight,
They drop through mere desire to prate,
And by themselves outwitted.

How bright soe'er the prospect seems,
All thoughts of friendship are but dreams,
If envy chance to creep in;
An envious man, if you succeed,
May prove a dangerous foe indeed,
But not a friend worth keeping.

As Envy pines at good possess'd,
So Jealousy looks forth distress'd
On good that seems approaching;
And, if success his steps attend,
Discerns a rival in a friend,
And hates him for encroaching.

Hence authors of illustrious name
(Unless belied by common fame)
Are sadly prone to quarrel,
To deem the wit a friend displays
A tax upon their own just praise,
And pluck each other's laurel.

A man renown'd for repartee
Will seldom scruple to make free
With Friendship's finest feeling,
Will thrust a dagger at your breast,
And say he wounded you in jest,
By way of balm for healing.

Whoever keeps an open ear
For tattlers will be sure to hear
The trumpet of Contention:
Aspersions are the babblers' trade,
To listen is to lend him aid,
And rush into dissension.

A friendship that in frequent fits
Of controversial rage emits
The sparks of disputation,
Like Hand-in-Hand insurance plates,
Most unavoidably creates
The thought of conflagration.

Some fickle creatures boast a soul
True as the needle to the pole,
Their humour yet so various—
They manifest their whole life through
The needle's deviations too,
Their love is so precarious.

The great and small but rarely meet
On terms of amity complete;

Plebeians must surrender
And yield so much to noble folk,
It is combining fire with smoke,
Obscurity with splendour.

Some are so placid and serene
(As Irish bogs are always green),
They sleep secure from waking;
And are indeed a bog that bears
Your unparticipated cares
Unmoved and without quaking.

Courtier and patriot cannot mix
Their heterogeneous politics,
Without an effervescence,
Like that of salts with lemon juice,
Which does not yet like that produce
A friendly coalescence.

Religion should extinguish strife,
And make a calm of human life;
But friends that chance to differ
On points which God has left at large,
How freely will they meet and charge!
No combatants are stiffer.

To prove at last my main intent
Needs no expense of argument,
No cutting and contriving—
Seeking a real friend we seem
To' adopt the chemist's golden dream,
With still less hope of thriving.

Sometimes the fault is all our own,
Some blemish in due time made known
By trespass or omission;
Sometimes occasion brings to light
Our friend's defect long hid from sight,
And even from suspicion.

Then judge yourself, and prove your man
As circumspectly as you can,
And, having made election,
Beware no negligence of yours,
Such as a friend but ill endures,
Enfeeble his affection.

That secrets are a sacred trust,
That friends should be sincere and just,
That constancy befits them
Are observations on the case
That savour much of commonplace,
And all the world admits them.

But 'tis not timber, lead, and stone,
An architect requires alone,
To finish a fine building;
The palace were but half complete
If he could possibly forget
The carving and the gilding.

The man that hails you Tom or Jack,
And proves by thumps upon your back
How he esteems your merit,
Is such a friend, that one had need
Be very much his friend indeed,
To pardon or to bear it.

As similarity of mind,
Or something not to be defined,
First fixes our attention;
So manners decent and polite,
The same we practised at first sight,
Must save it from declension.

Some act upon this prudent plan,
' Say little, and hear all you can.'
Safe policy, but hateful—
So barren sands imbibe the shower,
But render neither fruit nor flower,
Unpleasant and ungrateful.

The man I trust, if shy to me,
Shall find me as reserved as he;
No subterfuge or pleading
Shall win my confidence again,
I will by no means entertain
A spy on my proceeding.

These samples—for alas! at last
These are but samples and a taste
Of evils yet unmention'd—
May prove the task a task indeed,
In which 'tis much if we succeed,
However well intention'd.

Pursue the search and you will find
Good sense and knowledge of mankind
To be at least expedient,
And after summing all the rest,
Religion ruling in the breast
A principal ingredient.

The noblest friendship ever shown
The Saviour's history makes known,
Though some have turn'd and turn'd it;
And whether being crazed or blind,
Or seeking with a bias'd mind,
Have not, it seems, discern'd it.

O Friendship! if my soul forego
Thy dear delights while here below;
To mortify and grieve me,
May I myself at last appear
Unworthy, base, and insincere,
Or may my friend deceive me!

ODE TO PEACE.

COME, peace of mind, delightful guest!
Return and make thy downy nest
Once more in this sad heart:
Nor riches I nor power pursue,
Nor hold forbidden joys in view;
We therefore need not part.

Where wilt thou dwell, if not with me,
From avarice and ambition free,
And pleasure's fatal wiles?
For whom, alas! dost thou prepare
The sweets that I was wont to share,
The banquet of thy smiles?

The great, the gay, shall they partake
The heaven that thou alone canst make?
And wilt thou quit the stream
That murmurs through the dewy mead,
The grove, and the sequester'd shed,
To be a guest with them?

For thee I panted, thee I prized,
For thee I gladly sacrificed
 Whate'er I loved before;
And shall I see thee start away,
And helpless, hopeless, hear thee say—
 Farewell! we meet no more?

BOADICEA.

An Ode.

WHEN the British warrior queen,
 Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
 Counsel of her country's gods,
Sage beneath a spreading oak,
 Sat the Druid, hoary chief;
Every burning word he spoke
 Full of rage, and full of grief.
Princess! if our aged eyes
 Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
 All the terrors of our tongues.
Rome shall perish—write that word
 In the blood that she has spilt;
Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,
 Deep in ruin as in guilt.
Rome, for empire far renown'd,
 Tramples on a thousand states;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
 Hark! the Gaul is at her gates!

Other Romans shall arise,
Heedless of a soldier's name;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
Harmony the path to fame.

Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

Regions Cæsar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway;
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they.

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow;
Rush'd to battle, fought, and died;
Dying hurl'd them at the foe:

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
Heaven awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestow'd,
Shame and ruin wait for you.



C O W P E R
 Sings beneath the spreading oak
 Sat the Druid hoary chief.
And there

Engraved by Robt. Searles R.A.

Engraved by A. Gordon.

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ODE TO APOLLO.

ON AN INK-GLASS ALMOST DRIED IN THE SUN.

PATRON of all those luckless brains

That, to the wrong side leaning,
Indite much metre with much pains,
And little or no meaning;

Ah, why, since oceans, rivers, streams,
That water all the nations,
Pay tribute to thy glorious beams,
In constant exhalations;

Why, stooping from the noon of day,
Too covetous of drink,
Apollo, hast thou stolen away
A poet's drop of ink?

Upborne into the viewless air,
It floats a vapour now,
Impell'd through regions dense and rare,
By all the winds that blow:

Ordain'd perhaps ere summer flies,
Combined with millions more,
To form an Iris in the skies,
Though black and foul before.

Illustrious drop! and happy then
Beyond the happiest lot,
Of all that ever pass'd my pen,
So soon to be forgot!

Phœbus, if such be thy design,
To place it in thy bow,
Give wit, that what is left may shine
With equal grace below.

HORACE.

BOOK II. ODE X.

RECEIVE, dear friend, the truths I teach,
 So shalt thou live beyond the reach
 Of adverse Fortune's power:
 Not always tempt the distant deep,
 Nor always timorously creep,
 Along the treacherous shore.

He that holds fast the golden mean,
 And lives contentedly between
 The little and the great,
 Feels not the wants that pinch the poor,
 Nor plagues that haunt the rich man's door,
 Imbittering all his state.

The tallest pines feel most the power
 Of wintry blasts; the loftiest tower
 Comes heaviest to the ground;
 The bolts that spare the mountain's side,
 His cloud-capp'd eminence divide,
 And spread the ruin round.

The well inform'd philosopher
 Rejoices with a wholesome fear,
 And hopes in spite of pain:
 If Winter bellow from the north,
 Soon the sweet Spring comes dancing forth,
 And Nature laughs again:

What if thine heaven be overcast?
 The dark appearance will not last;
 Expect a brighter sky.
 The God that strings the silver bow,
 Awakes sometimes the Muses too,
 And lays his arrows by.

If hinderances obstruct thy way,
 Thy magnanimity display,
 And let thy strength be seen;
 But O! if Fortune fill thy sail
 With more than a propitious gale,
 Take half thy canvass in.

A REFLECTION

ON THE FOREGOING ODE.

AND is this all? Can Reason do no more
 Than bid me shun the deep and dread the shore;
 Sweet moralist! afloat on life's rough sea,
 The Christian has an art unknown to thee.
 He holds no parley with unmanly fears;
 Where duty bids he confidently steers,
 Faces a thousand dangers at her call,
 And, trusting in his God, surmounts them all.

THE ROSE.

THE rose had been wash'd, just wash'd in a shower,
 Which Mary to Anna convey'd,
 The plentiful moisture encumber'd the flower,
 And weigh'd down its beautiful head.
 The cup was all fill'd, and the leaves were all wet,
 And it seem'd, to a fanciful view,
 To weep for the buds it had left with regret
 On the flourishing bush where it grew.
 I hastily seized it, unfit as it was
 For a nosegay, so dripping and drown'd,
 And swinging it rudely, too rudely, alas!
 I snapp'd it, it fell to the ground.

And such, I exclaim'd, is the pitiless part
Some act by the delicate mind,
Regardless of wringing and breaking a heart
Already to sorrow resign'd.

This elegant rose, had I shaken it less,
Might have bloom'd with its owner awhile;
And the tear that is wiped with a little address,
May be follow'd perhaps by a smile.

THE WINTER NOSEGAY.

WHAT Nature, alas! has denied
To the delicate growth of our isle,
Art has in a measure supplied,
And Winter is deck'd with a smile.
See, Mary, what beauties I bring
From the shelter of that sunny shed,
Where the flowers have the charms of the spring,
Though abroad they are frozen and dead.

'Tis a bower of Arcadian sweets,
Where Flora is still in her prime,
A fortress to which she retreats
From the cruel assaults of the clime.
While Earth wears a mantle of snow,
These pinks are as fresh and as gay
As the fairest and sweetest that blow
On the beautiful bosom of May.

See how they have safely survived
The frowns of a sky so severe;
Such Mary's true love, that has lived
Through many a turbulent year.

The charms of the late-blowing rose
Seem graced with a livelier hue,
And the winter of sorrow best shows
The truth of a friend such as you.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE

WHICH THE AUTHOR HEARD SING ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

1792.

WHENCE is it, that amazed I hear
From yonder wither'd spray,
This foremost morn of all the year,
The melody of May?

And why, since thousands would be proud
Of such a favour shown,
Am I selected from the crowd,
To witness it alone?

Sing'st thou, sweet Philomel, to me,
For that I also long
Have practised in the groves like thee,
Though not like thee in song?

Or sing'st thou rather under force
Of some divine command,
Commission'd to presage a course
Of happier days at hand?

Thrice welcome then! for many a long
And joyless year have I,
As thou to-day, put forth my song
Beneath a wintry sky.

But thee no wintry skies can harm,
Who only need'st to sing,
To make e'en January charm,
And every season Spring.

THE POPLAR FIELD.

THE poplars are fell'd, farewell to the shade,
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade:
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse in his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I last took a
view [grew;
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat, that once lent me a shade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,
And the scene where his melody charm'd me
before,

Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

The change both my heart and my fancy employs,
I reflect on the frailty of man and his joys;
Shortlived as we are, yet our pleasures, we see,
Have a still shorter date, and die sooner than we.

THE SHRUBBERY.

WRITTEN IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION.

OH happy shades—to me unblest'd!
Friendly to peace, but not to me!
How ill the scene that offers rest,
And heart that cannot rest, agree!

This glassy stream, that spreading pine,
Those alders quivering to the breeze,
Might sooth a soul less hurt than mine,
And please, if any thing could please.

But fix'd unalterable Care
Foregoes not what she feels within,
Shows the same sadness every where,
And slights the season and the scene.

For all that pleased in wood or lawn,
While Peace possess'd these silent bowers,
Her animating smile withdrawn,
Has lost its beauties and its powers.

The saint or moralist should tread
This moss grown alley musing slow;
They seek like me the secret shade,
But not like me to nourish woe!

Me fruitful scenes and prospects waste
Alike admonish not to roam;
These tell me of enjoyments past,
And those of sorrows yet to come.



HUMAN FRAILTY,

WEAK and irresolute is man;
The purpose of to-day,
Woven with pains into his plan,
To-morrow rends away.

The bow well bent, and smart the spring,
Vice seems already slain;
But Passion rudely snaps the string,
And it revives again.

Some foe to his upright intent
Finds out his weaker part;
Virtue engages his assent,
But Pleasure wins his heart.

'Tis here the folly of the wise
Through all his art we view;
And, while his tongue the charge denies,
His conscience owns it true.

Bound on a voyage of awful length
And dangers little known,
A stranger to superior strength,
Man vainly trusts his own.

But oars alone can ne'er prevail
To reach the distant coast:
The breath of Heaven must swell the sail,
Or all the toil is lost.

A COMPARISON.

THE lapse of time and rivers is the same,
Both speed their journey with a restless stream;
The silent pace with which they steal away
No wealth can bribe, no prayers persuade to stay;
Alike irrevocable both when pass'd,
And a wide ocean swallows both at last.
Though each resemble each in every part,
A difference strikes at length the musing heart;
Streams never flow in vain; where streams abound
How laughs the land with various plenty crown'd!
But Time, that should enrich the nobler mind,
Neglected leaves a dreary waste behind.

ANOTHER.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

SWEET stream, that winds through yonder glade,
 Apt emblem of a virtuous maid—
 Silent and chaste she steals along,
 Far from the world's gay busy throng;
 With gentle yet prevailing force,
 Intent upon her destined course:
 Graceful and useful all she does,
 Blessing and bless'd where'er she goes,
 Pure bosom'd as that watery glass,
 And Heaven reflected in her face.

SONG ON PEACE.

AIR—" *My fond shepherds of late,*" &c.

No longer I follow a sound;
 No longer a dream I pursue;
 O Happiness! not to be found,
 Unattainable treasure, adieu!
 I have sought thee in splendour and dress,
 In the regions of pleasure and taste;
 I have sought thee, and seem'd to possess,
 But have proved thee a vision at last.
 An humble ambition and hope
 The voice of true Wisdom inspires;
 'Tis sufficient, if Peace be the scope
 And the summit of all our desires.
 Peace may be the lot of the mind
 That seeks it in meekness and love:
 But rapture and bliss are confined
 To the glorified spirits above.

SONG.

AIR—" *The Lass of Patie's Mill.*"

WHEN all within is peace,
 How nature seems to smile!
 Delights that never cease,
 The livelong day beguile.
 From morn to dewy eve,
 With open hand she showers
 Fresh blessings to deceive
 And sooth the silent hours.

It is content of heart
 Gives nature power to please;
 The mind that feels no smart
 Enlivens all it sees:
 Can make a wintry sky
 Seem bright as smiling May,
 And evening's closing eye
 As peep of early day.

The vast majestic globe,
 So beauteously array'd
 In nature's various robe,
 With wondrous skill display'd,
 Is to a mourner's heart
 A dreary wild at best;
 It flutters to depart,
 And longs to be at rest.

ON THE

LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE.

Written when the News arrived,

SEPT. 1782.

To the March in Scipio.

TOLL for the brave!

The brave that are no more!
 All sunk beneath the wave,
 Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
 Whose courage well was tried,
 Had made the vessel heel,
 And laid her on her side.

A land breeze shook the shrouds,
 And she was upset;
 Down went the Royal George,
 With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave!

Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
 His last seafight is fought;
 His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
 No tempest gave the shock;
 She sprang no fatal leak;
 She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath;
 His fingers held the pen,
 When Kempenfelt went down,
 With twice four hundred men.

230 SONNET TO W. WILBERFORCE.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with our cup
The tear that England owes.
Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again,
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.
But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

SONNET TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

1792.

THY country, Wilberforce, with just disdain,
Hears thee by cruel men and impious call'd
Fanatic, for thy zeal to loose the' enthrall'd
From exile, public sale, and slavery's chain.
Friend of the poor, the wrong'd, the fetter-gall'd,
Fear not lest labour such as thine be vain.
Thou hast achieved a part; hast gain'd the ear
Of Britain's senate to thy glorious cause;
Hope smiles, joy springs, and though cold
caution pause
And weave delay, the better hour is near
That shall remunerate thy toils severe
By peace for Afric, fenced with British laws.
Enjoy what thou hast won, esteem and love
From all the Just on earth and all the Bless'd above.

SONNET TO HENRY COWPER, ESQ.

ON HIS EMPHATICAL AND INTERESTING DELIVERY OF THE
DEFENCE OF WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ. IN THE HOUSE OF
LORDS.

COWPER, whose silver voice, task'd sometimes
Legends prolix delivers in the ears [hard,
(Attentive when thou read'st) of England's
peers,

Let verse at length yield thee thy just reward.

Thou wast not heard with drowsy disregard,
Expendng late on all that length of plea
Thy generous powers, but silence honour'd thee,
Mute as e'er gazed on orator or bard.

Thou art not voice alone, but hast beside
Both heart and head: and couldst with music
Of attic phrase and senatorial tone, [sweet
Like thy renown'd forefathers, far and wide
Thy fame diffuse, praised not for utterance meet
Of *others'* speech, but magic of *thy own*.

SONNET TO JOHN JOHNSON.

ON HIS PRESENTING ME WITH AN ANTIQUE BUST OF HOMER.

1793.

KINSMAN beloved, and as a son, by me!
When I behold this fruit of thy regard,
The sculptured form of my old favourite bard,
I reverence feel for him, and love for thee.

232 SONNET TO WILLIAM HAYLEY.

Joy too and grief. Much joy that there should be
Wise men and learn'd, who grudge not to reward
With some applause my bold attempt and hard,
Which others scorn: critics by courtesy.
The grief is this, that, sunk in Homer's mine,
I lose my precious years now soon to fail,
Handling his gold, which, howsoe'er it shine,
Proves dross when balanced in the Christian
scale.

Be wiser thou—like our forefather Donne,
Seek heavenly wealth, and work for God alone.

SONNET TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

1793.

DEAR architect of fine Chateaux in air,
Worthier to stand for ever, if they could,
Than any built of stone, or yet of wood,
For back of royal elephant to bear!

O, for permission from the skies to share,
Much to my own, though little to thy good,
With thee, (not subject to the jealous mood!)
A partnership of literary ware!

But I am bankrupt now; and doom'd henceforth
To drudge, in descant dry, on others' lays;
Bards, I acknowledge, of unequal'd worth!
But what is commentators' happiest praise?

That he has furnish'd lights for other eyes,
Which they who need them use, and then despise.

SONNET TO DR. AUSTIN.

1792.

AUSTIN! accept a grateful verse from me,
 The poet's treasure, no inglorious fee.
 Loved by the Muses, thy ingenuous mind
 Pleasing requital in my verse may find;
 Verse oft has dash'd the scythe of Time aside,
 Immortalizing names which else had died.
 And, oh! could I command the glittering wealth,
 With which sick kings are glad to purchase health;
 Yet, if extensive fame, and sure to live,
 Were in the power of verse like mine to give,
 I would not recompense his art with less,
 Who, giving Mary health, heals my distress.
 Friend of my friend¹! I love thee, though unknown,
 And boldly call thee, being his, my own.

SONNET TO GEORGE ROMNEY, ESQ.

ON HIS PICTURE OF ME IN CRAYONS, DRAWN AT EARTHAM,
 IN THE 61ST YEAR OF MY AGE, IN THE MONTHS OF AUGUST
 AND SEPTEMBER.

1792.

ROMNEY, expert infallibly to trace
 On chart or canvass, not the form alone
 And semblance, but, however faintly shown,
 The mind's impression too on every face—

¹ Hayley.

With strokes that time ought never to erase,
Thou hast so pencil'd mine, that though I own
The subject worthless, I have never known
The artist shining with superior grace.
But this I mark, that symptoms none of woe
In thy incomparable work appear.
Well—I am satisfied it should be so,
Since on maturer thought the cause is clear;
For in my looks what sorrow couldst thou see
When I was Hayley's guest, and sat to thee?

SONNET TO MRS. UNWIN.

1793.

MARY! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from Heaven as some have feign'd
they drew,
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things,
That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth with honour due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalizes whom it sings.
But thou hast little need. There is a book
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright;
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee
mine.

TO MARY.

AUTUMN OF 1793.

THE twentieth year is well nigh pass'd,
 Since first our sky was overcast,
 Ah, would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
 I see thee daily weaker grow—
 'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
 For my sake restless heretofore,
 Now rust disused, and shine no more,
My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
 The same kind office for me still,
 Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play'dst the housewife's part,
 And all thy threads with magic art
 Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
 Like language utter'd in a dream;
 Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign;
Yet gently press'd, press gently mine,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou provest,
That now at every step thou movest
Upheld by two, yet still thou lovest,
My Mary!

And still to love, though press'd with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But, ah! by constant heed I know,
How oft the sadness that I show
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn out heart will break at last,
My Mary!

ON
THE DEATH

OF

MRS. THROCKMORTON'S BULFINCH.

YE nymphs! if e'er your eyes were red
With tears o'er hapless favourites shed,
O, share Maria's grief!
Her favourite, even in his cage,
(What will not hunger's cruel rage?)
Assassin'd by a thief.

Where Rhenus strays his vines among,
The egg was laid from which he sprung,
And though by nature mute,
Or only with a whistle bless'd,
Well taught he all the sounds express'd
Of flagelet or flute.

The honours of his ebon poll
Were brighter than the sleekest mole,
His bosom of the hue
With which Aurora decks the skies,
When piping winds shall soon arise,
To sweep away the dew.

Above, below, in all the house,
Dire foe alike of bird and mouse,
No cat had leave to dwell;
And Bully's cage supported stood
On props of smoothest-shaven wood,
Large built and latticed well.

238 ON THE DEATH OF A BULFINCH.

Well latticed—but the grate, alas!
Not rough with wire of steel or brass,
 For Bully's plumage sake,
But smooth with wands from Ouse's side,
With which, when neatly peel'd and dried,
 The swains their baskets make.

Night veil'd the pole: all seem'd secure:
When led by instinct sharp and sure,
 Subsistence to provide,
A beast forth sallied on 'he scout,
Long back'd, long tail'd, with whisker'd snout,
 And badger-colour'd hide.

He entering at the study door,
Its ample area 'gan explore;
 And something in the wind
Conjectured, sniffing round and round,
Better than all the books he found,
 Food chiefly for the mind.

Just then, by adverse fate impress'd,
A dream disturb'd poor Bully's rest;
 In sleep he seem'd to view
A rat fast clinging to the cage,
And, screaming at the sad presage,
 Awoke and found it true.

For, aided both by ear and scent,
Right to his mark the monster went—
 Ah, Muse! forbear to speak
Minute the horrors that ensued;
His teeth were strong, the cage was wood—
 He left poor Bully's beak.

O, had he made that too his prey!
That beak, whence issued many a lay
Of such mellifluous tone,
Might have repaid him well, I wote,
For silencing so sweet a throat,
Fast stuck within his own.

Maria weeps—the Muses mourn—
So, when by Bacchanalians torn,
On Thracian Hebrus' side
The tree-enchanted Orpheus fell,
His head alone remain'd to tell
The cruel death he died.

THE

POET'S NEW-YEAR'S GIFT.

To Mrs. Chockmorton.

MARIA! I have every good
For thee wish'd many a time,
Both sad and in a cheerful mood,
But never yet in rhyme.

To wish thee fairer is no need,
More prudent or more sprightly,
Or more ingenious, or more freed
From temper-flaws unsightly.

What favour then not yet possess'd
Can I for thee require,
In wedded love already bless'd,
To thy whole heart's desire?

None here is happy but in part;
 Full bliss is bliss divine:
 There dwells some wish in every heart,
 And doubtless one in thine.
 That wish, on some fair future day,
 Which Fate shall brightly gild
 ('Tis blameless, be it what it may),
 I wish it all fulfill'd.

TO .

MRS. THROCKMORTON,

ON HER BEAUTIFUL TRANSCRIPT OF HORACE'S ODE
 AD LIBRUM SUUM.

FEBRUARY, 1790.

MARIA, could Horace have guess'd
 What honour awaited his ode,
 To his own little volume address'd,
 The honour which you have bestow'd:
 Who have traced it in characters here,
 So elegant, even, and neat,
 He had laugh'd at the critical sneer
 Which he seems to have trembled to meet.
 And sneer, if you please, he had said,
 A nymph shall hereafter arise,
 Who shall give me, when you are all dead,
 The glory your malice denies;
 Shall dignity give to my lay,
 Although but a mere bagatelle;
 And even a poet shall say,
 Nothing ever was written so well.

CATHARINA.

To Miss Stapleton, now Mrs. Courtnay.

SHE came—she is gone—we have met—
 And meet perhaps never again;
 The sun of that moment is set,
 And seems to have risen in vain,
 Catharina has fled like a dream—
 (So vanishes pleasure, alas!)
 But has left a regret and esteem
 That will not so suddenly pass.

The last evening ramble we made,
 Catharina, Maria, and I,
 Our progress was often delay'd
 By the nightingale warbling nigh.
 We paused under many a tree,
 And much she was charm'd with a tone
 Less sweet to Maria and me,
 Who so lately had witness'd her own.

My numbers that day she had sung,
 And gave them a grace so divine,
 As only her musical tongue
 Could infuse into numbers of mine.
 The longer I heard, I esteem'd
 The work of my fancy the more,
 And e'en to myself never seem'd
 So tuneful a poet before.

Though the pleasures of London exceed
 In number the days of the year,
 Catharina, did nothing impede,
 Would feel herself happier here;

For the close woven arches of limes
On the banks of our river, I know,
Are sweeter to her many times
Than aught that the city can show.

So it is, when the mind is endued
With a well judging taste from above,
Then, whether embellish'd or rude,
'Tis nature alone that we love.
The' achievements of art may amuse,
May even our wonder excite,
But groves, hills, and valleys diffuse
A lasting, a sacred delight.

Since then in the rural recess
Catharina alone can rejoice,
May it still be her lot to possess
The scene of her sensible choice!
To' inhabit a mansion remote
From the clatter of street-pacing steeds,
And by Philomel's annual note
To measure the life that she leads.

With her book, and her voice, and her lyre,
To wing all her moments at home,
And with scenes that new rapture inspire,
As oft as it suits her to roam,
She will have just the life she prefers,
With little to hope or to fear,
And ours would be pleasant as hers,
Might we view her enjoying it here.

CATHARINA.

Second Part.

ON HER MARRIAGE TO GEORGE COURTNEY, ESQ. 1792.

BELIEVE it or not, as you choose,
 The doctrine is certainly true,
 That the future is known to the muse,
 And poets are oracles too.
 I did but express a desire
 To see Catharina at home,
 At the side of my friend George's fire,
 And lo—she is actually come.

Such prophecy some may despise,
 But the wish of a poet and friend
 Perhaps is approved in the skies,
 And therefore attains to its end.
 'Twas a wish that flew ardently forth
 From a bosom effectually warm'd
 With the talents, the graces, and worth
 Of the person for whom it was form'd.

Maria¹ would leave us, I knew,
 To the grief and regret of us all,
 But less to our grief, could we view
 Catharina the queen of the hall:
 And therefore I wish'd as I did,
 And therefore this union of hands:
 Not a whisper was heard to forbid,
 But all cry—Amen—to the bans.

Since therefore I seem to incur
 No danger of wishing in vain,
 When making good wishes for her,
 I will e'en to my wishes again—

¹ Lady Throckmorton.

With one I have made her a wife,
 And now I will try with another,
 Which I cannot suppress for my life—
 How soon I can make her a mother.

GRATITUDE.

Addressed to Lady Basketh.

1786.

THIS cap, that so stately appears,
 With ribbon-bound tassel on high,
 Which seems by the crest that it rears
 Ambitious of brushing the sky:

This cap to my cousin I owe;
 She gave it, and gave me beside,
 Wreathed into an elegant bow,
 The ribbon with which it is tied.

This wheel-footed studying chair,
 Contrived both for toil and repose,
 Wide-elbow'd, and wadded with hair,
 In which I both scribble and doze,
 Bright-studded to dazzle the eyes,
 And rival in lustre of that
 In which, or Astronomy lies,
 Fair Cassiopeia sat:

These carpets, so soft to the foot,
 Caledonia's traffic and pride!
 Oh, spare them, ye knights of the boot,
 Escaped from a cross-country ride!
 This table and mirror within,
 Secure from collision and dust,
 At which I oft shave cheek and chin,
 And periwig nicely adjust:

This movable structure of shelves,
For its beauty admired and its use,
And charged with octavos and twelves,
The gayest I had to produce;
Where, flaming in scarlet and gold,
My poems enchanted I view,
And hope in due time to behold
My Iliad and Odyssey too:

This china, that decks the alcove,
Which here people call a boufet,
But what the gods call it above
Has ne'er been reveal'd to us yet:
These curtains, that keep the room warm,
Or cool, as the season demands,
Those stoves, that for pattern and form,
Seem the labour of Mulciber's hands:

All these are not half that I owe
To one, from our earliest youth
To me ever ready to show
Benignity, friendship, and truth;
For Time, the destroyer declared,
And foe of our perishing kind,
If even her face he has spared,
Much less could he alter her mind.

Thus compass'd about with the goods
And chattels of leisure and ease,
I indulge my poetical moods
In many such fancies as these;
And fancies I fear they will seem—
Poets' goods are not often so fine;
The poets will swear that I dream,
When I sing of the splendour of mine.

TO MY COUSIN

ANNE BODHAM,

ON RECEIVING FROM HER A NETWORK PURSE, MADE
BY HERSELF.

1793.

MY gentle Anne, whom heretofore,
 When I was young, and thou no more
 Than plaything for a nurse,
 I danced and fondled on my knee,
 A kitten both in size and glee,
 I thank thee for my purse.

Gold pays the worth of all things here;
 But not of love;—that gem's too dear
 For richest rogues to win it;
 I, therefore, as a proof of love,
 Esteem thy present far above
 The best things kept within it.

TO MRS. KING.

ON HER KIND PRESENT TO THE AUTHOR, A PATCHWORK
COUNTERPANE OF HER OWN MAKING.

1790.

THE Bard, if e'er he feel at all,
 Must sure be quicken'd by a call
 Both on his heart and head,
 To pay with tuneful thanks the care
 And kindness of a lady fair
 Who deigns to deck his bed.

A bed like this, in ancient time,
On Ida's barren top sublime
 (As Homer's epic shows),
Composed of sweetest vernal flowers,
Without the aid of sun or showers,
 For Jove and Juno rose.

Less beautiful, however gay,
Is that which in the scorching day
 Receives the weary swain,
Who, laying his long scythe aside,
Sleeps on some bank with daisies pied,
 Till roused to toil again.

What labours of the loom I see!
Looms numberless have groan'd for me!
 Should every maiden come
To scramble for the patch that bears
The impress of the robe she wears,
 The bell would toll for some.

And oh, what havoc would ensue!
This bright display of every hue
 All in a moment fled!
As if a storm should strip the bowers
Of all their tendrils, leaves, and flowers—
 Each pocketing a shred.

Thanks then to every gentle fair,
Who will not come to peck me bare
 As bird of borrow'd feather.
And thanks to one above them all,
The gentle fair of Pertenhall,
 Who put the whole together.

TO LADY AUSTEN.

1781.

DEAR Anna—between friend and friend,
 Prose answers every common end;
 Serves in a plain and homely way,
 To' express the' occurrence of the day;
 Our health, the weather, and the news;
 What walks we take, what books we chuse;
 And all the floating thoughts we find
 Upon the surface of the mind.

But when a poet takes the pen,
 Far more alive than other men,
 He feels a gentle tingling come
 Down to his finger and his thumb.
 Derived from nature's noblest part,
 The centre of a glowing heart:
 And this is what the world who knows
 No flights above the pitch of prose,
 His more sublime vagaries slighting,
 Denominates an itch for writing.
 No wonder I, who scribble rhyme
 To catch the triflers of the time,
 And tell them truths divine and clear,
 Which, couch'd in prose, they will not hear;
 Who labour hard to' allure and draw
 The loiterers I never saw,
 Should feel that itching, and that tingling,
 With all my purpose intermingling,
 To your intrinsic merit true,
 When call'd to' address myself to you.

Mysterious are His ways, whose power
 Brings forth that unexpected hour,

When minds, that never met before,
Shall meet, unite, and part no more:
It is the' allotment of the skies,
The hand of the Supremely Wise,
That guides and governs our affections,
And plans and orders our connexions;
Directs us in our distant road,
And marks the bounds of our abode.
Thus we were settled when you found us,
Peasants and children all around us,
Not dreaming of so dear a friend,
Deep in the' abyss of Silver End¹.
Thus Martha, e'en against her will,
Perch'd on the top of yonder hill;
And you, though you must needs prefer
The fairer scenes of sweet Sancerre²,
Are come from distant Loire to choose
A cottage on the banks of Ouse.
This page of Providence quite new,
And now just opening to our view,
Employs our present thoughts and pains,
To guess and spell what it contains:
But day by day, and year by year,
Will make the dark enigma clear;
And furnish us perhaps at last,
Like other scenes already past,
With proof, that we and our affairs
Are part of a Jehovah's cares:
For God unfolds, by slow degrees,
The purport of his deep decrees;

¹ An obscure part of Olney, adjoining to the residence of Cowper, which faced the market-place.

² Lady Austen's residence in France.

Sheds every hour a clearer light
In aid of our defective sight;
And spreads, at length, before the soul,
A beautiful and perfect whole,
Which busy man's inventive brain
Toils to anticipate in vain.

Say, Anna, had you never known
The beauties of a rose full blown,
Could you, though luminous your eye,
By looking on the bud, descry,
Or guess, with a prophetic power,
The future splendour of the flower?
Just so the' Omnipotent, who turns
The system of a world's concerns,
From mere minutiae can educe
Events of most important use;
And bid a dawning sky display
The blaze of a meridian day.
The works of man tend, one and all,
As needs they must, from great to small;
And vanity absorbs at length
The monuments of human strength.
But who can tell how vast the plan
Which this day's incident began;
Too small, perhaps, the slight occasion
For our dim-sighted observation;
It pass'd unnoticed, as the bird
That cleaves the yielding air unheard,
And yet may prove, when understood,
A harbinger of endless good.

Not that I deem, or mean to call
Friendship a blessing cheap or small;
But merely to remark, that ours,
Like some of nature's sweetest flowers,

Rose from a seed of tiny size,
That seem'd to promise no such prize;
A transient visit intervening,
And made almost without a meaning
(Hardly the effect of inclination,
Much less of pleasing expectation),
Produced a friendship, then begun,
That has cemented us in one;
And placed it in our power to prove,
By long fidelity and love,
That Solomon has wisely spoken;
' A threefold cord is not soon broken.'

ON

MRS. MONTAGU'S FEATHER HANGINGS.

THE Birds put off their every hue,
To dress a room for Montagu.
The Peacock sends his heavenly dyes,
His *rainbows* and his *starry eyes*;
The Pheasant plumes, which round in fold
His mantling neck with downy gold;
The Cock his arch'd tail's azure show;
And, river blanch'd, the Swan his snow,
All tribes beside of Indian name,
That glossy shine, or vivid flame,
Where rises and where sets the day,
Whate'er they boast of rich and gay,
Contribute to the gorgeous plan,
Proud to advance it all they can.
This plumage neither dashing shower,
Nor blasts that shake the dripping bower

Shall drench again or discompose,
But, screen'd from every storm that blows,
It boasts a splendour ever new,
Safe with protecting Montagu.

To the same patroness resort,
Secure of favour at her court,
Strong Genius, from whose forge of thought
Forms rise, to quick perfection wrought,
Which, though newborn, with vigour move,
Like Pallas springing arm'd from Jove—
Imagination scattering round
Wild roses over furrow'd ground,
Which Labour of his frown beguile,
And teach Philosophy a smile—
Wit flashing on Religion's side,
Whose fires, to sacred Truth applied,
The gem, though luminous before,
Obtrudes on human notice more,
Like sunbeams on the golden height
Of some tall temple playing bright—
Well tutor'd Learning, from his books
Dismiss'd with grave, not haughty, looks,
Their order on his shelves exact,
Not more harmonious or compact
Than that, to which he keeps confined
The various treasures of his mind—
All these to Montagu's repair,
Ambitious of a shelter there.
There Genius, Learning, Fancy, Wit,
Their ruffled plumage calm refit
(For stormy troubles loudest roar
Around their flight who highest soar),
And in her eye, and by her aid,
Shine safe without a fear to fade.

She thus maintains divided sway
With yon bright regent of the day;
The Plume and Poet both, we know,
Their lustre to his influence owe;
And she, the works of Phœbus aiding,
Both Poet saves and Plume from fading.

TO AN

AFFLICTED PROTESTANT LADY

In France.

MADAM,

A STRANGER'S purpose in these lays
Is to congratulate and not to praise.
To give the creature the Creator's due
Were sin in me, and an offence to you.
From man to man, or e'en to woman paid,
Praise is the medium of a knavish trade,
A coin by Craft for Folly's use design'd,
Spurious, and only current with the blind.

The path of sorrow, and that path alone
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown:
No traveller ever reach'd that bless'd abode,
Who found not thorns and briers in his road.
The World may dance along the flowery plain,
Cheer'd as they go by many a sprightly strain;
Where Nature has her mossy velvet spread,
With unshod feet they yet securely tread;
Admonish'd, scorn the caution and the friend,
Bent all on pleasure, heedless of its end. [prove,
But He, who knew what human hearts would
How slow to learn the dictates of his love,

That, hard by nature and of stubborn will,
A life of ease would make them harder still,
In pity to the souls his grace design'd
To rescue from the ruins of mankind,
Call'd for a cloud to darken all their years,
And said, 'Go spend them in the vale of tears.'
O balmy gales of soul-reviving air!
O salutary streams that murmur there!
These flowing from the Fount of Grace above,
Those breathed from lips of everlasting love.
The flinty soil indeed their feet annoys,
Chill blasts of trouble nip their springing joys,
An envious world will interpose its frown
To mar delights superior to its own,
And many a pang experienced still within,
Reminds them of their hated inmate, Sin;
But ills of every shape and every name,
Transform'd to blessings, miss their cruel aim;
And every moment's calm that soothes the breast
Is given in earnest of eternal rest.

Ah, be not sad, although thy lot be cast
Far from the flock, and in a boundless waste!
No shepherd's tents within thy view appear,
But the chief Shepherd even there is near;
Thy tender sorrows and thy plaintive strain
Flow in a foreign land, but not in vain;
Thy tears all issue from a source divine,
And every drop bespeaks a Saviour thine—
So once in Gideon's fleece the dews were found,
And drought on all the drooping herbs around.

TO

JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

DEAR Joseph—five and twenty years ago—
 Alas, how time escapes!—'tis even so—
 With frequent intercourse, and always sweet,
 And always friendly, we were wont to cheat
 A tedious hour—and now we never meet!
 As some grave gentleman in Terence says
 ('Twas therefore much the same in ancient days),
 Good lack, we know not what to-morrow brings—
 Strange fluctuation of all human things!
 True. Changes will befall, and friends may part,
 But distance only cannot change the heart;
 And, were I call'd to prove the' assertion true,
 One proof should serve—a reference to you.

Whence comes it then, that, in the wane of life
 Though nothing have occur'd to kindle strife,
 We find the friends we fancied we had won,
 Though numerous once, reduced to few or none?
 Can gold grow worthless that has stood the touch?
 No; gold they seem'd, but they were never such.

Horatio's servant once, with bow and cringe,
 Swinging the parlour door upon its hinge,
 Dreading a negative, and overawed
 Lest he should trespass, begg'd to go abroad.
 Go, fellow!—whither?—turning short about—
 Nay. Stay at home—you're always going out.
 'Tis but a step, Sir, just at the street's end.—
 For what?—An please you, Sir, to see a friend—
 A friend! Horatio cried, and seem'd to start—
 Yea marry shalt thou, and with all my heart.—
 And fetch my cloak; for, though the night be raw,
 I'll see him too—the first I ever saw.

I knew the man, and knew his nature mild,
And was his plaything often when a child;
But somewhat at that moment pinch'd him close,
Else he was seldom bitter or morose.
Perhaps his confidence just then betray'd,
His grief might prompt him with the speech he
made;

Perhaps 'twas mere good humour gave it birth,
The harmless play of pleasantry and mirth:
Howe'er it was, his language, in my mind,
Bespoke at least a man that knew mankind.

But not to moralize too much and strain,
To prove an evil of which all complain,
(I hate long arguments verbosely spun)
One story more, dear Hill, and I have done.
Once on a time an emperor, a wise man,
No matter where, in China or Japan,
Decreed, that whosoever should offend
Against the well known duties of a friend,
Convicted once should ever after wear
But half a coat, and show his bosom bare.
The punishment importing this, no doubt,
That all was naught within; and all found out.

O happy Britain! we have not to fear
Such hard and arbitrary measure here;
Else, could a law, like that which I relate,
Once have the sanction of our triple state,
Some few, that I have known in days of old,
Would run most dreadful risk of catching cold;
While you, my friend, whatever wind should blow,
Might traverse England safely to and fro,
An honest man, close-button'd to the chin,
Broadcloth without, and a warm heart within.

TO

THE REV. MR. NEWTON,

AN INVITATION INTO THE COUNTRY.

THE swallows in their torpid state
 Compose their useless wing,
 And bees in hives as idly wait
 The call of early Spring.

The keenest frost that binds the stream,
 The wildest wind that blows,
 Are neither felt nor fear'd by them,
 Secure of their repose.

But man, all feeling and awake,
 The gloomy scene surveys;
 With present ills his heart must ache,
 And pant for brighter days.

Old Winter, halting o'er the mead,
 Bids me and Mary mourn;
 But lovely Spring peeps o'er his head,
 And whispers your return.

Then April, with her sister May,
 Shall chase him from the bowers,
 And weave fresh garlands every day,
 To crown the smiling hours.

And if a tear, that speaks regret
 Of happier times, appear,
 A glimpse of joy, that we have met,
 Shall shine, and dry the tear.

TO THE

REV. MR. NEWTON,

ON HIS RETURN FROM RAMSGATE.—OCTOBER, 1780.

THAT ocean you have late survey'd,
 Those rocks I too have seen,
 But I afflicted and dismay'd,
 You tranquil and serene.

You from the flood-controlling steep,
 Saw stretch'd before your view,
 With conscious joy, the threatening deep,
 No longer such to you.

To me, the waves that ceaseless broke
 Upon the dangerous coast,
 Hoarsely and ominously spoke
 Of all my treasure lost.

Your sea of troubles you have pass'd,
 And found the peaceful shore;
 I, tempest-toss'd, and wreck'd at last,
 Come home to port no more.

TO THE

REV. W. CAWTHORNE UNWIN.

UNWIN, I should but ill repay
 The kindness of a friend,
 Whose worth deserves as warm a lay
 As ever Friendship penn'd,
 Thy name omitted in a page,
 That would reclaim a vicious age.

A union form'd as mine with thee,
Not rashly nor in sport,
May be as fervent in degree,
And faithful in its sort,
And may as rich in comfort prove,
As that of true fraternal love.

The bud inserted in the rind,
The bud of peach or rose,
Adorns, though differing in its kind,
The stock whereon it grows,
With flower as sweet, or fruit as fair,
As if produced by Nature there.

Not rich, I render what I may,
I seize thy name in haste,
And place it in this first essay,
Lest this should prove the last.
'Tis where it should be—in a plan
That holds in view the good of man.

The poet's lyre, to fix his fame,
Should be the poet's heart;
Affection lights a brighter flame
Than ever blazed by art.
No Muses on these lines attend,
I sink the poet in the friend.

TO A YOUNG FRIEND,

ON HIS ARRIVING AT CAMBRIDGE WET, WHEN NO RAIN
HAD FALLEN THERE.—1793.

If Gideon's fleece, which drench'd with dew he
found,
While moisture none refresh'd the herbs around,
Might fitly represent the Church, endow'd
With heavenly gifts, to Heathens not allow'd;

260 ON LORD MANSFIELD'S LIBRARY.

In pledge, perhaps, of favours from on high,
Thy locks were wet when others' locks were dry.
Heaven grant us half the omen—may we see
Not drought on others, but much dew on thee!

ON

THE BURNING

OF LORD MANSFIELD'S LIBRARY, TOGETHER
WITH HIS MSS.

By the Mob, in the Month of June, 1780.

So then—the Vandals of our isle,
Sworn foes to sense and law,
Have burn'd to dust a nobler pile
Than ever Roman saw!

And Murray sighs o'er Pope and Swift,
And many a treasure more,
The well judg'd purchase and the gift,
That graced his letter'd store.

Their pages mangled, burn'd, and torn,
The loss was *his alone*;
But ages yet to come shall mourn
The burning of *his own*.

ON THE SAME.

WHEN Wit and Genius meet their doom
In all-devouring flame,
They tell us of the fate of Rome,
And bid us fear the same.

O'er Murray's loss the Muses wept,
They felt the rude alarm,
Yet bless'd the guardian care that kept
His sacred head from harm.

There Memory, like the bee that's fed
From Flora's balmy store,
The quintessence of all he read
Had treasured up before.

The lawless herd, with fury blind,
Have done him cruel wrong;
The flowers are gone—but still we find
The honey on his tongue.

ON THE PROMOTION OF

EDWARD THURLOW, ESQ.

TO THE LORD HIGH CHANCELLORSHIP OF ENGLAND.

ROUND Thurlow's head in early youth,
And in his sportive days,
Fair Science pour'd the light of truth,
And Genius shed his rays.

See! with united wonder cried
The experienced and the sage,
Ambition in a boy supplied
With all the skill of age!

Discernment, eloquence, and grace
Proclaim him born to sway
The balance in the highest place,
And bear the palm away.

The praise bestow'd was just and wise;
He sprang impetuous forth,
Secure of conquest, where the prize
Attends superior worth.
So the best courser on the plain
Ere yet he starts is known,
And does but at the goal obtain
What all had deem'd his own.

THE DIVERTING

HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN;

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE INTENDED,
AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN.

JOHN Gilpin was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A train-band captain eke was he
Of famous London town.
John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,
Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen.
To-morrow is our wedding day,
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton
All in a chaise and pair.
My sister, and my sister's child,
Myself and children three,
Will fill the chaise; so you must ride
On horseback after we.

He soon replied, I do admire
Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
Therefore it shall be done.

I am a linen-draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender
Will lend his horse to go.

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin, That's well said;
And for that wine is dear,
We will be furnish'd with our own,
Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kiss'd his loving wife;
O'erjoy'd was he to find,
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allow'd
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud:

So three doors off the chaise was stay'd,
Where they did all get in;
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
Were never folk so glad,
The stones did rattle underneath,
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side
Seized fast the flowing mane,
And up he got, in haste to ride,
But soon came down again;

For saddle-tree scarce reach'd had he,
His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he saw
Three customers come in.

So down he came; for loss of time,
Although it grieved him sore,
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers
Were suited to their mind,
When Betty screaming came down stairs,
The wine is left behind!

Good lack! quoth he—yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword,
When I do exercise.

Now mistress Gilpin (careful soul!)
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she loved,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipp'd from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brush'd and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,
With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which gall'd him in his seat.
So, fair and softly, John he cried,
But John he cried in vain;
That trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.
So stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.
His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.
Away went Gilpin, neck or naught;
Away went hat and wig;
He little dream'd, when he set out,
Of running such a rig.
The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till, loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.
Then might all people well discern
The bottles he had slung;
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.
The dogs did bark, the children scream'd,
Up flew the windows all;
And every soul cried out, Well done!
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he;
His fame soon spread around;
He carries weight! he rides a race!
’Tis for a thousand pound!

And still as fast as he drew near,
’Twas wonderful to view,
How in a trice the turnpike men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shatter’d at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse’s flanks to smoke,
As they had basted been.

But still he seem’d to carry weight,
With leathern girdle braced;
For all might see the bottle-necks
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
Until he came unto the Wash
Of Edmonton so gay;

And there he threw the wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wondering much
To see how he did ride.

Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house—

They all aloud did cry;

The dinner waits, and we are tired:

Says Gilpin—so am I!

But yet his horse was not a whit

Inclined to tarry there;

For why?—his owner had a house

Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,

Shot by an archer strong;

So did he fly—which brings me to

The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin out of breath,

And sore against his will,

Till at his friend the calender's

His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amazed to see

His neighbour in such trim,

Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,

And thus accosted him:

What news? what news? your tidings tell?

Tell me you must and shall—

Say why bareheaded you are come,

Or why you come at all?

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,

And loved a timely joke;

And thus unto the calender

In merry guise he spoke:

I came because your horse would come;

And, if I well forebode,

My hat and wig will soon be here,

They are upon the road,

The calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Return'd him not a single word,
But to the house went in:

When straight he came with hat and wig;
A wig that flow'd behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn
Thus show'd his ready wit—
My head is twice as big as yours,
They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face;
And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case.

Said John, it is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware.

So turning to his horse, he said,
I am in haste to dine;
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine.

Ah luckless speech, and bootless boast!
For which he paid full dear;
For, while he spake, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
Had heard a lion roar,
And gallop'd off with all his might,
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig;
He lost them sooner than at first;
For why?—they were too big.
Now mistress Gilpin, when she saw
Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
She pull'd out half a crown;
And thus unto the youth she said,
That drove them to the Bell,
This shall be yours, when you bring back
My husband safe and well.
The youth did ride, and soon did meet
John coming back amain;
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
By catching at his rein:
But not performing what he meant,
And gladly would have done,
The frightened steed he frighted more,
And made him faster run.
Away went Gilpin, and away
Went postboy at his heels,
The postboy's horse right glad to miss
The lumbering of the wheels.
Six gentlemen upon the road,
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With postboy scampering in the rear,
They raised the hue and cry:—
Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!
Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that pass'd that way
Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
Flew open in short space;
The toll-men thinking as before,
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
For he got first to town;
Nor stopp'd till where he had got up
He did again get down.

Now let us sing, long live the king,
And Gilpin, long live he;
And, when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see!

THE

YEARLY DISTRESS;

OR,

TITHING-TIME AT STOCK IN ESSEX.

VERSES ADDRESSED TO A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN, COMPLAIN-
ING OF THE DISAGREEABLENESS OF THE DAY ANNUALLY
APPOINTED FOR RECEIVING THE DUES AT THE PARSON-
AGE.

COME, ponder well, for 'tis no jest,
To laugh it would be wrong;
The troubles of a worthy priest
The burden of my song.

The priest he merry is and blithe
Three quarters of the year,
But oh! it cuts him like a scythe
When tithing-time draws near.

He then is full of frights and fears,
As one at point to die,
And long before the day appears
He heaves up many a sigh.

For then the farmers come, jog, jog,
Along the miry road,
Each heart as heavy as a log,
To make their payments good.

In sooth the sorrow of such days
Is not to be express'd,
When he that takes and he that pays
Are both alike distress'd.

Now all unwelcome at his gates
The clumsy swains alight,
With rueful faces and bald pates—
He trembles at the sight.

And well he may, for well he knows
Each bumpkin of the clan,
Instead of paying what he owes,
Will cheat him if he can.

So in they come—each makes his leg,
And flings his head before,
And looks as if he came to beg,
And not to quit a score.

‘ And how does miss and madam do,
The little boy and all?’
‘ All tight and well. And how do you,
Good Mr. What-d’ye-call?’

The dinner comes, and down they sit:
Were e’er such hungry folk?
There’s little talking, and no wit;
It is no time to joke.

One wipes his nose upon his sleeve,
One spits upon the floor,
Yet not to give offence or grieve,
Holds up the cloth before.

The punch goes round, and they are dull
And lumpish still as ever;
Like barrels with their bellies full,
They only weigh the heavier.

At length the busy time begins,
'Come, neighbours, we must wag.'
The money chinks, down drop their chins,
Each lugging out his bag.

One talks of mildew and of frost,
And one of storms and hail,
And one of pigs that he has lost
By maggots at the tail.

Quoth one, 'A rarer man than you
In pulpit none shall hear;
But yet, methinks, to tell you true,
You sell it plaguy dear.'

O, why are farmers made so coarse,
Or clergy made so fine?
A kick that scarce would move a horse,
May kill a sound divine.

Then let the boobies stay at home;
'Twould cost him, I dare say,
Less trouble taking twice the sum,
Without the clowns that pay.

ON
THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO LONDON,

THE NIGHT OF THE 17TH MARCH, 1789.

WHEN, long sequester'd from his throne,
George took his seat again,
By right of worth, not blood alone,
Entitled here to reign.

Then, Loyalty, with all his lamps
New-trimm'd, a gallant show!
Chasing the darkness and the damps,
Set London in a glow.

'Twas hard to tell of streets or squares,
Which form'd the chief display,
These most resembling cluster'd stars,
Those the long milky way.

Bright shone the roofs, the domes, the spires,
And rockets flew, self-driven,
To hang their momentary fires
Amid the vault of heaven.

So, fire with water to compare,
The ocean serves, on high
Up-spouted by a whale in air,
To' express unwieldy joy.

Had all the pageants of the world
In one procession join'd,
And all the banners been unfurl'd
That heralds e'er design'd;

For no such sight had England's Queen
Forsaken her retreat,
Where George, recover'd, made a scene
Sweet always, doubly sweet.

Yet glad she came that night to prove,
A witness undescried,
How much the object of her love
Was loved by all beside.

Darkness the skies had mantled o'er
In aid of her design——
Darkness, O Queen! ne'er call'd before
To veil a deed of thine!

On borrow'd wheels away she flies,
Resolved to be unknown,
And gratify no curious eyes
That night, except her own.

Arrived, a night like noon she sees,
And hears the million hum;
As all by instinct, like the bees,
Had known their sovereign come.

Pleased she beheld aloft portray'd,
On many a splendid wall,
Emblems of health and heavenly aid,
And George the theme of all.

Unlike the enigmatic line,
So difficult to spell,
Which shook Belshazzar at his wine
The night his city fell.

Soon watery grew her eyes and dim,
But with a joyful tear,
None else, except in prayer for him,
George ever drew from her.

It was a scene in every part
 Like those in fable feign'd,
 And seem'd by some magician's art
 Created and sustain'd.

But other magic there, she knew,
 Had been exerted none,
 To raise such wonders in her view,
 Save love of George alone.

That cordial thought her spirits cheer'd,
 And through the cumbrous throng,
 Not else unworthy to be fear'd,
 Convey'd her calm along.

So, ancient poets say, serene
 The seamaid rides the waves,
 And fearless of the billowy scene
 Her peaceful bosom laves.

With more than astronomic eyes
 She view'd the sparkling show;
 One Georgian star adorns the skies,
 She myriads found below.

Yet let the glories of a night
 Like that, once seen, suffice,
 Heaven grant us no such future sight,
 Such previous woe the price!

ANNUS MEMORABILIS, 1789.

WRITTEN IN

COMMEMORATION OF HIS MAJESTY'S HAPPY RECOVERY.

I RANSACK'D, for a theme of song,
Much ancient chronicle, and long;
I read of bright embattled fields,
Of trophied helmets, spears, and shields,
Of chiefs, whose single arm could boast
Prowess to dissipate a host:
Through tomes of fable and of dream
I sought an eligible theme,
But none I found, or found them shared
Already by some happier bard.

To modern times, with Truth to guide
My busy search, I next applied;
Here cities won and fleets dispersed
Urged loud a claim to be rehearsed,
Deeds of unperishing renown,
Our fathers' triumphs and our own.

Thus, as the bee from bank to bower,
Assiduous sips at every flower,
But rests on none till that be found
Where most nectareous sweets abound,
So I from theme to theme display'd
In many a page historic stray'd,
Siege after siege, fight after fight,
Contemplating with small delight
(For feats of sanguinary hue
Not always glitter in my view);
Till, settling on the current year,
I found the far sought treasure near;

A theme for poetry divine,
A theme to' ennoble even mine,
In memorable eighty-nine.

The spring of eighty-nine shall be
An era cherish'd long by me,
Which joyful I will oft record,
And thankful at my frugal board;
For then the clouds of eighty-eight,
That threaten'd England's trembling state
With loss of what she least could spare,
Her sovereign's tutelary care,
One breath of Heaven, that cried—Restore!
Chased, never to assemble more;
And far the richest crown on earth,
If valued by its wearer's worth,
The symbol of a righteous reign,
Sat fast on George's brows again.

Then peace and joy again possess'd
Our queen's long agitated breast,
Such joy and peace as can be known
By sufferers like herself alone;
Who, losing or supposing lost
The good on earth they valued most,
For that dear sorrow's sake forego
All hope of happiness below,
Then suddenly regain the prize,
And flash thanksgivings to the skies!

O queen of Albion, queen of isles!
Since all thy tears were changed to smiles,
The eyes that never saw thee shine
With joy not unallied to thine,
Transports not chargeable with art
Illume the land's remotest part,
And strangers to the air of courts,
Both in their toils and at their sports,

The happiness of answer'd prayers,
That gilds thy features, show in theirs.
If they, who on thy state attend,
Awe-struck, before thy presence bend,
'Tis but the natural effect
Of grandeur that ensures respect;
But she is something more than queen,
Who is beloved where never seen.

SUBMISSION.

O LORD, my best desire fulfill,
And help me to resign
Life, health, and comfort to thy will,
And make thy pleasure mine.
Why should I shrink at thy command,
Whose love forbids my fears?
Or tremble at the gracious hand
That wipes away my tears?
No, let me rather freely yield
What most I prize to Thee;
Who never hast a good withheld,
Or wilt withhold from me.
Thy favour all my journey through
Thou art engaged to grant;
What else I want, or think I do,
'Tis better still to want.
Wisdom and mercy guide my way,
Shall I resist them both?
A poor blind creature of a day,
And crush'd before the moth!

But, ah! my inward spirit cries,
Still bind me to thy sway;
Else the next cloud that veils my skies,
Drives all these thoughts away.

A TALE.

1793.

IN Scotland's realm where trees are few,
Nor even shrubs abound;
But where, however bleak the view,
Some better things are found.

For Husband there and Wife may boast
Their union undefiled,
And false ones are as rare almost
As hedge-rows in the wild.

In Scotland's realm forlorn and bare
The history chanced of late—
This history of a wedded pair,
A chaffinch and his mate.

The spring drew near, each felt a breast
With genial instinct fill'd;
They pair'd, and would have built a nest,
But found not where to build.

The heaths uncover'd and the moors,
Except with snow and sleet,
Seabeaten rocks, and naked shores,
Could yield them no retreat.

Long time a breeding-place they sought,
Till both grew vex'd and tired;
At length a ship arriving brought
The good so long desired.

A ship!—could such a restless thing
Afford them place of rest?
Or was the merchant charged to bring
The homeless birds a nest?

Hush—Silent hearers profit most—
This racer of the sea
Proved kinder to them than the coast,
It served them with a tree.

But such a tree! 'twas shaven deal,
The tree they call a Mast,
And had a hollow with a wheel
Through which the tackle pass'd.

Within that cavity aloft
Their roofless home they fix'd,
Form'd with materials neat and soft,
Bents, wool, and feathers mix'd.

Four ivory eggs soon pave its floor,
With russet specks bedight—
The vessel weighs, forsakes the shore,
And lessens to the sight.

The mother-bird is gone to sea,
As she had changed her kind;
But goes the male? Far wiser he
Is doubtless left behind?

No—Soon as from ashore he saw
The winged mansion move,
He flew to reach it, by a law
Of never failing love.

Then perching at his consort's side
Was briskly borne along,
The billows and the blast defied,
And cheer'd her with a song.
The seaman with sincere delight
His feather'd shipmates eyes,
Scarce less exulting in the sight
Than when he tows a prize.
For seamen much believe in signs,
And from a chance so new
Each some approaching good divines,
And may his hopes be true!
Hail, honour'd land! a desert where
Not even birds can hide,
Yet parent of this loving pair
Whom nothing could divide.
And ye who, rather than resign
Your matrimonial plan,
Were not afraid to plough the brine
In company with man.
For whose lean country much disdain
We English often show,
Yet from a richer nothing gain
But wantonness and woe.
Be it your fortune, year by year,
The same resource to prove,
And may ye, sometimes landing here,
Instruct us how to love!

A TALE,

FOUNDED ON A FACT, WHICH HAPPENED IN JANUARY, 1779,

WHERE Humber pours his rich commercial
 stream, [pheme.
 There dwelt a wretch, who breathed but to blas-
 In subterraneous caves his life he led,
 Black as the mine, in which he wrought for bread.
 When on a day, emerging from the deep,
 A sabbath-day (such sabbaths thousands keep!)
 The wages of his weekly toil he bore
 To buy a cock—whose blood might win him more;
 As if the noblest of the feather'd kind
 Were but for battle and for death design'd;
 As if the consecrated hours were meant
 For sport, to minds on cruelty intent;
 It chanced (such chances Providence obey),
 He met a fellow-labourer on the way,
 Whose heart the same desires had once inflamed;
 But now the savage temper was reclaim'd.
 Persuasion on his lips had taken place;
 For all plead well who plead the cause of grace.
 His iron-heart with Scripture he assail'd,
 Woo'd him to hear a sermon, and prevail'd.
 His faithful bow the mighty preacher drew,
 Swift, as the lightning-glimpse, the arrow flew.
 He wept; he trembled; cast his eyes around,
 To find a worse than he; but none he found.
 He felt his sins, and wonder'd he should feel.
 Grace made the wound, and grace alone could heal.

Now farewell oaths, and blasphemies, and lies!
He quits the sinner's for the martyr's prize.
That holy day was wash'd with many a tear,
Gilded with hope, yet shaded too by fear.
The next his swarthy brethren of the mine
Learn'd, by his alter'd speech—the change divine!
Laugh'd when they should have wept, and swore
the day

Was nigh, when he would swear as fast as they.
‘No (said the penitent): such words shall share
This breath no more; devoted now to prayer.
O! if thou seest (thine eye the future sees),
That I shall yet again blaspheme, like these;
Now strike me to the ground, on which I kneel,
Ere yet this heart relapses into steel;
Now take me to that heaven I once defied,
Thy presence, thy embrace!’—He spoke and
died!

ON A

PLANT OF VIRGIN'S-BOWER

DESIGNED TO COVER A GARDEN-SEAT.

1793.

THRIVE, gentle plant! and weave a bower
For Mary and for me,
And deck with many a splendid flower
Thy foliage large and free.
Thou camest from Eartham, and wilt shade
(If truly I divine)
Some future day the' illustrious head
Of Him who made thee mine.

284 A PLANT OF VIRGIN'S-BOWER.

Should Daphne show a jealous frown
And Envy seize the bay,
Affirming none so fit to crown
Such honour'd brows as they.
Thy cause with zeal we shall defend,
And with convincing power;
For why should not the Virgin's Friend
Be crown'd with Virgin's-bower?

EPIGRAM.

To purify their wine some people bleed
A lamb into the barrel, and succeed;
No nostrum, planters say, is half so good
To make fine sugar, as a *negro's* blood.
Now *lamb*s and *negroes* both are harmless things,
And thence perhaps this wondrous virtue springs,
'Tis in the blood of innocence alone—
Good cause why planters never try their own.

EPITAPH

ON MR. CHESTER, OF CHICHELEY.

TEARS flow, and cease not, where the good man
Till all who knew him follow to the skies. [lies,
Tears therefore fall where Chester's ashes sleep;
Him wife, friends, brothers, children, servants
weep—
And justly—few shall ever him transcend
As husband, parent, brother, master, friend.

END OF VOL. I.

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